

BOLSHEVIK RUSSIA

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTORY	7
II. RUSSIA AND THE RUSSIANS	22
III. THE BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE BOLSHEVIKS . . .	39
IV. LENIN AND LABOUR IN RUSSIA	66
V. RUSSIAN FINANCE BEFORE AND AFTER THE REVOLUTION	94
VI. RUSSIAN INDUSTRY ,	103
VII. THE ARMED PROLETARIAT	123
VIII. THE BOLSHEVIK THREAT TO THE WORLD .	154
APPENDIX. THE RUSSIAN SOVIET CONSTITUTION	167

BOLSHEVIK RUSSIA

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTORY

THE Englishman has a traditional disinclination for concerning himself with foreign countries. He has been accustomed to sum up their national characteristics in a phrase—usually more or less offensive—and relegate them to their place on the map. Hitherto he has known little of world history and cared less. For him, his own has been the only country that counts.

If any exception can be allowed to the grown men of the present and past generation as regards this general indifference it may be made perhaps for Russia. Russia has been our land of thrills and horror. Cruel wicked Tsars, holding a nation in bondage, with a life's exile in Siberia as the punishment for a word or a look—such conceptions have shocked and appalled us. And many imagined that these Russians were all Prince Kropotkins or Tolstoys—that they were cultured and charming, and, above all, Europeans like ourselves. The Armenian Massacres and Congo Atrocities left us unmoved as a nation.

Those victims were barbarians, and we neither understood them nor wanted to. We felt sure that if they were not being outraged themselves they were outraging someone else, and probably it was all very much in the day's work. Of course our first misconception was to think of Russia in terms of Europe and of Russians as being wholly European. The perplexities of the situation will never be banished until we accept the facts. It will therefore be well to set forth as much of the history of Russia as is necessary and helpful to a sound understanding of present events. We will trace the movements and forces that brought Russia to the Revolution.

Equally important is it to describe the living Russia of to-day, the peoples and their characteristics; their spiritual, social, and industrial setting. We must master this Revolution in all its bearings and details, not because it is a Russian problem, but because it is a whole-world problem, carrying with it for good or evil tremendous consequences for ourselves.

That a republic should succeed a monarchy is little more than an interesting experiment in statecraft. This Russian affair is unfortunately bigger than that. When the Tsar was done to death Karl Marx was brought to life. It is not merely the political form of Government that has been changed, it is in economics that the great plunge has been made. Lenin and his followers have set up the Marxian scheme of Socialism in the largest

country of the world and very near to our shores. Men and women visionaries and enthusiasts have dreamed of this, toiled for it and prayed for it. And the miracle has happened. We must study it in the fullest detail, for if it be good it will not end in Russia, and if it be evil it must not begin in any other land.

Lenin's speeches and decrees, which we will set forth later, prove incontestably the truth of our statement that the new Russian rule is Marxian. Why, then, talk so much of "Bolshevism," a coined word that means nothing and only serves to deceive? Should the Russian affair fail, your English Socialist will still proclaim his old fallacies, if we concede that it is just one more "ism" that has gone under. It is not. It is Marxian Socialism that holds Russia by the throat, and it is Marxian Socialism that must be utterly condemned everywhere if it fails under Lenin. It should be clearly understood that Lenin's experiments in Russia are not a spasmodic or a chaotic action, but a progressive fulfilment of a well-prepared plan based entirely on Marxian theories. Lenin, as he calls himself, is but an interpreter of Marx.

Now as to outrages. Let us find a true perspective in this matter. We do not for an instant condone, or do anything but deplore, the horrors of the Revolution. The Red Flag has been followed by the Red Guards and the Red Terror, and there has been blood all the

way. But there is an ancient saying that "once you scratch a Russian you find a Tartar," and these Tartars are not altogether the most gentle of fellows. History tells us too that some of the world's greatest advances to order have had a bloody start. Civilisation as well as Christianity has had its Calvary. We in our own Empire-building have bared the sword before we established the Law.

The use of force is well-nigh inevitable in a revolution. But that is one thing. When once the *coup d'état* is accomplished, the continuance of force, if it be on the part of the new regime, may or may not be justifiable for the suppression of counter-movements. When, however, as in Russia, force and outrage are persisted in month after month, we can have nothing but condemnation for the Government that is either as in some instances the direct agent, or as in others the tolerant and often acquiescent spectator. Our Socialists in this country, who only run to blood in the colour of their neck-ties and in the flag that adorns their platforms, may indeed lose the courage of their strong language if they are driven to realise that Socialism in practice has its peroration of death.

We are anxious none the less that the facts of these Russian outrages should not prejudice judgment. It is not the machinery of the Revolution, but the results, that we must consider; and when we are dealing with a people that is semi-barbaric we cannot expect the best of manners.

Your Russian, unlike the Englishman, both uses force and submits to it. That is an asset for the Revolutionary Government. Throughout the long centuries he has enjoyed but little personal freedom, and so will not miss it if he fails to get more now. If Socialism, as its opponents have always urged, means bondage, this will be no new experience for the Russian peasant, who only became a "freed" man (on paper) as late as the year 1855. If Socialism involves a servile acquiescence in the dictates of some central authority—that again is all that the Russian has ever been accustomed to. Indeed one could imagine no country and no people on the civilised fringe of the world whose conditions and traditions offered to Socialism a finer chance. Of course should Socialism succeed in Russia it by no means follows that it can or could succeed elsewhere; but if it fails in Russia we would be wise to bury Karl Marx again, burn everything he wrote and charitably forget that he ever lived.

We shall, of course, be scrupulously careful in submitting Russian facts, and shall give our authorities so that our readers may appreciate their value. Many of the friends of the Revolution proclaim that Lenin's rule is a triumphant success. We confess that we are not deeply impressed with this assurance, if only for the reason that quite as numerous a body—and equally friendly to the Revolution!—tell us that it *would* have been successful had it not been for the Allies'

blockade of Russia. Mr. Lansbury is apparently unable to find adjectives sufficiently enthusiastic to convey to us his description of the happiness, contentment, and prosperity of the fortunate Russians. Yet as a set-off to this, there is the grim testimony of the thousands of anguished refugees—some 2,000,000 in all, of whom 15,000 are estimated to be in Great Britain at the moment of writing—who for some strange reason have fled from this paradise of freedom and plenty.

Now why should we be faced with these flat contradictions and perplexities? Russia is quite near to us. Cannot we go and judge for ourselves? Yes—we can. But only if we are proved sympathisers. Even then so warm is our welcome that we are never allowed out of sight and hearing of our Socialist hosts. The facts with regard to this are disquieting and are deserving of serious consideration. Again, the Russian press should surely help us. Their papers come over here. Unfortunately they are valueless as an aid to solving our doubts. ALL the opposition press has been suppressed. The *Novoye Vremya*, the *Rietch*, *Russkaya Viedomosti*, *Russkoye Slovo*, *Dielo Naroda*, and a hundred other papers have ceased to exist, and only those accepting the Soviet platform are allowed publication.

In the case of the above-mentioned papers they were confiscated, and the editors and writers associated with them either escaped or were imprisoned; their fate is still un-

known. But as a typical example of the Bolshevik suppression of the press the decree published in the *Izviestya*, July 27th, 1918, No. 159, should be referred to. It was under this decree that the Press Department was given the right to grant permits for publication to organs *that accepted the Soviet platform*. This came as a surprise, but was a reply to the cry against the suppression of the press raised by the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries in the June Soviet Conference. Acting upon this decree, the would-be editor of a new paper, the *Mir* (peace), applied for a permit, and it was granted; but after a few issues the Press Department suppressed the *Mir*, announcing:

“At the present moment the requirements of the population of the Federal Soviet Republic for means of daily information are adequately met by the Soviet publication. . . . The Press Department, therefore, considers it impossible to permit the further publication of the *Mir*, and has decided to suppress this paper for ever,” (*Izviestya*, October 17th, 1918, No. 226).

Another instance is even more illuminating. The Russian Wireless of February 26th, 1919, gives the following information:

“The Central Executive Committee has confirmed the decision to close the newspaper *Vsegda Vperiod*, as its appeals for the cessation of civil war appear to be a betrayal of the working classes.”

The labour papers, *Edinstvo*, *Gazeta Rabot-*

chavo, *Rabotchy Golos*, started after the Revolution, and edited by well-known Social Democrats, as well as others, met with similar fate.

It is obvious that Socialism in Russia does not run to Free Speech, but vastly prefers Free Prison. Some may regret this and excuse it. They may well urge that the Revolutionary Government still has its enemies and dare not allow them to raise their heads and open their mouths. The question arises as to whether the Socialist powers will ever allow anyone who disagrees with them to have their public say. This is a grave matter, because it does not merely mean that a Socialist Government is always to be unchallenged whether the people like it or not, but it means that the particular Government and the particular officials of whom it is composed are alone to be recognised and supported by the only papers whose publication is officially sanctioned. It is not merely those who oppose Socialism who are muzzled, it is also all the Socialists who are not in the official swim. And this is officially admitted. Speaking on June 26th, 1920, at the Serpukhovo works, Lenin said: "Freedom is a bourgeois notion. . . . What Russia wants is an iron government of a few determined men, and that she happily has" (reported in the *Proletarian Echo*, June 28th, 1920).

One result of the manipulation of the Russian press emerges. Russian papers tell us nothing about Russia except what Lenin and his men approve of our knowing—unless

it is by accident. These journals are valueless as an aid to discovery as to whether the Revolution has been a real success or a complete failure. There are, however, other sources of information which are at our disposal.

The whole civilised world has for years been implored to join the Socialists, and we are sure that everyone is anxious to know whether Socialism in Russia has succeeded or failed. Now as cautious men we should surely make a careful preliminary examination of this problem. We should realise at once that it is vitally to the interest of Lenin and his men that the world outside Russia should be convinced of the success of the Revolution. Whether it has actually succeeded or failed, it is impossible for the Government of Russia to be maintained without outside trading assistance. If the Revolution has failed and the condition of Russia is chaotic, what trader will be such a fool as to send goods without a hope of payment? Who could blame Lenin if he were the bankrupt bluffing for more credit? It would be quite a natural part for him to play, and in the successful acting of it he might even save his country and his skin, to say nothing of those Socialist theories which would otherwise be drenched in blood and ridicule. It will be manifest that the greater the actual failure of the Revolution, the more brazen must be Lenin's claim for its success.

That is the one side. But there is conceivably another. Suppose that it actually

has succeeded, and that all the other facts which we shall subsequently quote are mythical, and that these Russian refugees and revolutionaries of the Tsaristic era are all liars and lunatic enough to run away from happiness. If the Revolution be a success—and it is vitally to Lenin and Marxian Russia's interest to prove that success to the world—he can do so in a week. He can throw Russia open. He can let us go in and see the miracle. He can let us go hither and thither from happy villages to prosperous towns unconduted, unhampered, merely to examine for ourselves.

But he does nothing of the sort. Socialism has been enshrined and the Veil of the Temple is drawn closely about it. It is the High Priest's word that we must alone take as proof that the mysteries are there.

Unfortunately there are a multitude of reasons why we cannot accept the High Priest's word.

Lenin apart, there are others whose deep concern it is to assure us that the Revolution has produced a miracle. There are still Germans in our world and they love us no more than they ever did. Just as certainly as they sent aircraft over our towns, so did they foment the Russian debacle with their emissaries. The Bolshevik *coup d'état* was carefully planned, prepared, and financed; it was by German intrigues that Russia, our ally, was knocked out of the fight against the Central Powers. Does anyone imagine

that the Germans have finished fighting now that peace has come? Has not Russia's tragic example proved to them that they can lay waste their enemies by revolution more effectively, more lastingly, and more devastatingly than they could in warfare? Karl Marx was a German of the Germans, and Marx has done more for the Fatherland than all the hordes of German agents that have filtered across the world. A revolution for the sake of a change from Monarchy to Republicanism is one thing. It is a passing convulsion and merely effective for the time. But a revolution from economic sanity to Marxian lunacy is lasting, and involves an upheaval as paralyzing as any could be. What does it matter if thrones totter while a country lives on? Dig up poisonous old Marx with his world-distributed followers. Proclaim everywhere by a hireling press—and we are not without it in this country—and by a hireling gang of International Socialists—and we have entertained many of them here—that the Marxian Revolution in Russia is a triumphant success. And then see what happens! The call would then come from the Socialist organisations: "See what has happened in Russia? They have tried Socialism and it has succeeded. Marx is on top and has confounded the 'stick-in-the-muds.' Follow Russia."

Little wonder, then, that the Socialists in this country, in unison with their comrades in the international organisations, are proclaiming in every market-place that Russia

has found salvation in Socialism. Germans not infrequently lie and agitators do not always tell the truth, and their united effort, so vehement and insistent, is sweeping many of our people off their balance. They have at least gained the initial advantage that it lies upon us to prove that Lenin has failed. Fortunately this is a task that presents no difficulty.

Should anyone dispute the statement that Germany is at the bottom of the Russian debacle, we had best prove our case before going farther. Such doubters will not, we take it, challenge the fact that one of the proved methods of German war-making was the starting of revolutionary upheavals in the countries of her enemies. The evidence of what actually happened in India, South Africa, Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, and elsewhere, has been officially investigated and is open to anyone's perusal. In Great Britain and, above all, in Ireland, Germany's efforts in the same direction were seldom relaxed during the war. Among Englishmen, Welshmen, and Scotsmen the incessant activity of her agents and her money had little success, but on the other side of the Irish Channel she let loose sheer hell, and the end of it is not in sight.

With Russia, Germany's political association is of longer standing. It began in the eleventh century, and marriages between the two courts became frequent from that time. German trading interests in Russia took

organised form under the Hanseatic League until that body was destroyed by Ivan the Terrible in 1570. In 1613, however, Michael, the first of the Romanoffs, opened the doors of Russia to Germany once more, and we find that as long ago as 1631 German gunners were hired to work the new Russian artillery, and in the following year 1,500 German mercenaries under foreign colonels fought in a Russian expedition against Smolensk. Under Peter the Great, German influence rapidly extended, so much so indeed that the rumour was widely credited that Peter was the son of a German surgeon. From his time until quite recently even the Russian Academy of Science issued its publications in German only. From the time of Peter until now Russian officers have borne German words to describe their rank, and the same language has done similar duty in the appointments of the Russian Court. Even the name of the very capital of Russia was German—"St. Petersburg."

Two hundred and seventeen years ago Peter the Great laid the foundations of the Russia of to-day. Anatole Leroy Beaulieu has described this monarch as "the most imperious of crowned Revolutionists," but as likely as not Peter merely prided himself on being an enlightened prince. Ruling over a people that was overwhelmingly Eastern, he turned wistful eyes to the West and transformed St. Petersburg into "a window into Europe." Wearied of being a Russian, he sought to become a Prussian, and, from his day onwards,

Germans in increasing numbers have sought prosperity and gained power in the policies of Russia. Russian statecraft has been a see-saw game between St. Petersburg and Moscow. But whether Moscow with its tyrants in the Church and Court was dominant, or whether St. Petersburg with its revolutionaries held sway, German influence was a permanent condition which steadily gained power during the years. Nicholas I had a foreign minister who was not only German by birth, but was actually incapable of speaking a word of Russian, and during that Tsar's reign no unfavourable criticism whatever of Germany was allowed in any Russian newspaper. When Prussia waged her three wars with Denmark, Austria, and France, Alexander II stood by her and assuredly deserved the historic telegram of gratitude which was sent him by Bismarck in 1870. From 1863 to 1878 the policy of the two nations was in absolute accord, and a special military plenipotentiary was accredited to the person of the Tsar for the medium of confidential communications to and from Germany.

Not only was the Ruling House dominated by Germany, but the ruling caste as well. In 1907 M. N. Rubakin published statistics in the *Moscow Review*, showing that in 1902 144 Russian generals were German in blood, while in 1905 the number had risen to 180. These skilfully placed sons of the Fatherland had their minds set on the war that was coming and made their plans in readiness.

General Grimwald, the Tsar's aide-de-camp, opposed every military reform and saw to it that Russia in arms should be as heavily handicapped as she possibly could be. A host of powerful Germans, such as General Rennenkampf, Stürmer, and von Plehve, did similar service. While we looked in confidence to the progress of the Russian "steam-roller" the Kaiser must have chuckled over the debacle that was coming. And now the "steam-roller" has gone and there is only the man with the Red Flag!

Of course in Russia the Germans played for reaction. Their hold on the country would not be tolerated if the Russian found freedom. It was a system imposed on a servile people by autocrats. Beyond doubt the rulers of Russia were afraid of the Russian people and found a sense of security in their imported disciplinarians. All the native reactionaries in Russia were actively pro-German and even threatened the progressives with German intervention. "If you accept this project the Kaiser will come and teach you a lesson with his armed fist" was a warning given to the Cadets in the Duma some years before the war.

CHAPTER II

RUSSIA AND THE RUSSIANS

“**H**ANDS off Russia !” “Save Russia for Democracy !” These are the invocations that deafen us whenever Socialists take the platform. They imply that the Russian people have consciously and deliberately accepted Lenin’s Marxian faith and that the Capitalists will interfere unless Labour bars the way. The British worker, who is of course “a wage-slave,” is not only abjured to stand by his Russian comrade, who has just found freedom, but is implored to follow his example. Since the Russian Revolution, Force has been increasingly and quite openly advocated in this country as being the only means by which a swift victory can be gained.

What is this Russia and what manner of men are these Russians who have found “emancipation” ? If we can show, as we shall, that the measure of Force that achieved the Revolution is nothing to the volume of the Force that is called for every hour of every day to impose the Revolution on the “emancipated,” these British sympathisers will be devoting themselves to maintaining the bondage of a nation.

The Russian Empire is a vast stretch of territory. Up to the year 1917 it occupied an area exceeding 8,500,000 English square miles, of which 2,200,000 only were in Europe while 6,300,000 were in Asia and the Caucasus. Here indeed we have East and West together. Here we have peoples sundered geographically and as sharply divided by race, language, and custom as the Englishman is from the Indian or the Armenian. So far as it was possible to number these peoples, their total in 1915 was stated to be 174,000,000, of whom 14·2 % were claimed to be town-dwellers and 85·8 % villagers or peasants living in remote wildernesses. Now it is a simple statement of unchallengeable fact that so great are the distances between scattered hamlets and lonely huts in the immense wilderness that stands for the vastly greater part of Russia, and so lacking are the means of transport and communication that many millions of these people have never even heard of the name of Lenin or of the programme of his Government. They live in a world beyond a world, and these things have not reached them and as likely as not never will. To abjure us to keep our "hands off" these poor folk so that we may keep them "safe for democracy" is a jejune triumph of rhetorical audacity.

Lenin's claim is of course that all Russia is red for Revolution. The British Labour assertion is that all Russia has embraced Marxian Socialism. But how is "all Russia" divided up in point of diverging race customs

and language—divisions which never yet in all history have come together or found a common outlook and a mutual acceptance? Of her 174,000,000 people, 65·5 % only are Russians. Of the remainder, 10·6 % are Turco-Tartars, 6·3 % are Poles, 4·5 % Finns, 3·9 % Jews, 2·4 % Lithuanians, and 1·6 % Germans—nearly 2,000,000 persons.

Equally illuminating and confounding to those who thus courageously claim this sweeping and all-embracing acceptance of Socialism is the division of the population into ranks and occupations. If we take first the social status as per thousand of population, we find that there were nobles 15, clergy 5, merchants and manufacturers 5, burgesses 105, *peasants* 771, Cossacks 23, aborigines 66, others 8. Then taking occupations per thousand. Civil service and professional 14, Army and Navy 101, Church 6, domestic and day labourers 46, private means and pensioners 181, *agriculture, forests, etc.*, 746, manufacture, industry, and mining 96, commerce and traffic 16, trade and commerce 38, other occupations 10. These figures show that over two-thirds of the population of Russia are peasants. *Up to the year 1905 there was no education whatever within reach of the peasant class, the overwhelming majority of whom cannot even read or write to-day.*

What a triumph for Lenin and Lansbury ! What a thrill for the wrinkled students of the complex works of Marx ! The only country in the world that has strangled itself with the

Red Flag is a country where three-quarters and more of its people cannot even read or write ! And we--are to " follow Russia ! "

While the embryo state-wreckers of Ruskin College are throwing up their caps in joy, Marx in the shades will be writhing. No more subtle and poignant insult can have crowned the labours of any philosopher. His life's work, rejected with scorn by 999 out of every 1,000 who read it, has been jobbed off on to a horde of poor illiterate peasants. And we--are to " follow Russia " and complaisantly fling ourselves into another and even worse than the Russian hell.

That the Russians themselves have done so can only be understood by those few English people who have some conception of the overwhelming fatalism that is so predominant in the character of the real Russian. When in trouble or facing a catastrophe his invariable attitude is expressed in the word " Nitchevo," which stands for many English words, but especially expresses the " don't care " spirit. Nitchevo plumbs the very depths of resignation. It does not mean " I will fight it out, or I will win in the end," but it means " something will happen, something must happen--so let it happen."

In years long ago, when the cruel Tartars descended on the Russian plains to kill, torture, and ravage, the Russians withstood them. These Tartars came and came again--breaking without warning on the Russians from unknown worlds on one side, and striv-

ing to strike through to an equally unknown world beyond. The Russians believed that they were blocking these onslaughts to save someone else in the beyond, and when through the years these murderous ravages were repeated, it is a historical fact that the belief grew and was accepted of all that it was Russia's mystic destiny to suffer and be sacrificed to save some other race. It may well be that this fine mystic faith will be fulfilled once more. Truly we will "follow Russia" with our minds and prayers. Her agony, flung on her by worse than Tartars, will be, when it stands revealed in all its insensate cruelty and arrogant wrong, a warning to the world. And there may come a time when, freed from the Marxian bondage, the gates of Russia will be open again to free men. Then, to the utmost of our ability, we, who will have been saved by that agony, must haste in to her and heal her wounds and give her strength.

By the law of the Russian Empire the people were divided into four classes: the Clergy, the Nobility, Burghers, and Peasants.

The Church, subordinate to the Patriarch of Constantinople in its earlier period, became in time a free and independent power. When, however, in the reign of Peter the Great the Patriarchate was abolished and the Holy Synod established in its place, it became purely servile. The Synod was neither more nor less than a government watch-dog and the highly

organised agent of autocracy. The Tsar was its absolute head, determining its policy and shaping and controlling its activities.

The suppression of ecclesiastical freedom in Russia has played a historic part and has resulted not only in social and individual oppression, but is also responsible for the popular hatred of the priesthood. The Romanoffs themselves were descendants of the clergy. Michael Romanoff, the Tsar, was the son of Philaret, Patriarch of Moscow. Little wonder, then, that the peasant sees in the priest only the shadow of a Tsar. Peter the Great, chafing at the power of the Church, substituted the authority of the nobility. But it was not the same type of nobility which we know in this country. It was not a caste or order, but a specially created body drawn from all classes of the population. Originally of course many of the great landowners had been nobles, but the Tartar occupation left them landless, and Ivan the Terrible, with his restrictions against the Boyars (noblemen), finally destroyed all that had stood for feudalism of the old kind. It was left to Peter to establish his nobles on a new basis, that of "State Service," but it was not long before the "service" became a legend and the nobles merely looked after themselves. Many of these nobles became great State employees, governors of districts and imperial revenue-collectors, who extorted taxes for the Crown and enriched themselves while they oppressed the workers.

That is one side of the picture. On the other we see that nearly all Russia's poets, artists, writers, and men of learning and advanced thought came from the nobles. Zhukovsky, Pushkin, Gogol, Turgenieff, Dostoyevski, and Tolstoy sprang from the landlord nobility. Even Lenin, whose real name is Ulianoff, comes from the State employee nobility. Many members of the noble class joined and even led revolutions, and the long road to the Siberian exile stations has been trod by more nobles than by any other class of the population. For the Russian peasant his nobility is a mystery of mingled dread and hope. It has at one and the same time given him the most cruel of his tyrants and the most inspiring of his deliverers.

Curiously enough, in Russia the middle class is a negligible quantity. In almost all other countries there is a vast constituency midway between the manual workers and the substantially possessive class. The buffer class which there emerges is a steadying national influence and a factor of great economic and political value. It is possibly the lack of any equivalent in Russia that is responsible for her prolonged and seemingly hopeless chaos. In both towns and villages there are, of course, some representatives of this class, but they are so few as to be without power or even influence. In the towns they are for the most part revolutionaries. They form the "*intelligentsya*," the intellectuals, and are reinforced by clerks, accountants,

professional men, students, and brainy artisans of the higher categories. It is a petulant, sullen, and on the whole irresponsible section. It delights in its very irresponsibility and plays a sort of Bernard Shaw part in lost causes. Unlike our middle class, which generally supports the Government as a Government—irrespective of party—it always opposes it. Unlike our middle class, which is supposed to be the bulwark of Church and State, it loathes both. It was the middle class in Russia that manned the “*Tchinovniki*” (Civil Service), whose members soon by sheer force of circumstances became a new class of their very own. Then, very quickly, their old ideas were forgotten and they mouthed amazing loyalty to the Tsar who fed them. They became incredible proficient in bribery and their corruption has become a by-word.

The *moujik*—the Russian peasant—is without his like or anything near to his like even in the remotest districts of this country. Physically, he is hardy and a splendid creature without anything suggestive of “nerves.” His fare is the simplest and poorest, yet he thrives finely on it. He has no home comforts, yet he loves his rude dwelling. He is a family man in a much deeper and closer sense than is usually known here. His whole life is begirt by his immediate setting. He lives and loves, and his world is the land on which he works. And he is a very peaceful fellow, made servile by centuries of oppression or

semi-oppression. What we know as "the fighting spirit" is utterly foreign to him. He does not even fight when he is drunk. His mind is a wilderness empty and untended. His only excitements flow from nature, his only emotions centre round the home folk beside him.

The moujik is a mystic and finds his solace in his Church, but even here there is a wide gulf between the man and his God. The priest stands between, and the priests of the orthodox Greek Church are hateful to the peasants. The priest is grouped with the State officials and the landlords amongst the body of oppressors. And the priest knows that he is hated and passes out from the village life when he closes the church door. There is no visiting or attempt at intercourse such as is usual in this country. Still the peasant loves the Church. He has no understanding of dogma, no knowledge of the meaning of the service or of many of the words used. It is the ritual that appeals to his senses and above all the singing that delights him. He sings in chorus or alone on his way to work, while toiling and on return. When in the army he had a whole festival of song. The Russian marching songs were exquisite.

We should realise clearly that, until 1855, these peasants were actual serfs and that slavery since that year was replaced with a freedom that was merely nominal. In 1855 they merely passed into the hands of the big landowners, who took advantage of their

defenceless poverty and ground them down in the most irksome and ill-requited toil. If a peasant hired himself out to work for such a master he got a starvation wage, or if he tilled some of the master's land the agent took nearly all the harvest. He had to do one or other of these things or starve. He never could be a small-holder himself. That such a man should desire to own the land he worked was surely the most natural thing in the world. Why should nearly all the harvest always belong to someone else? Why should his little sons have no happier hope than he? One thing he could not do—and that was to leave that little bit of land and the tiny home. A forced journey to a town carries with it for him a severance that is anguish. All his soul will be set on returning as soon as possible. "I have," runs a typical message (sent through a professional letter-writer) from one of these exiles, "already saved up eight roubles and will soon be home."

This land-hunger is inevitable amongst land-lovers. Over and over again it has made history in the world. We will later see the use that Lenin made of it and how utterly frustrated was his Marxian solution when pitted against the inexorable forces of human nature.

But before we leave the peasant—this wonderful fellow who is proclaimed as having given an understanding blessing to Marx and his works and to Lenin and his devotees—

we should realise how truly primitive he is. His superstition, for instance, recalls an age of which the records can hardly be found among Western nations, and is persisted in with the most disastrous practical effects. Even if a fire breaks out in a peasant village the moujik does not think of throwing water on the flames or beating them down with his flail to save his beloved homestead. His one resource is to run for the Ikons and hold them up so that God may change the wind. And on the other side of the burning are his neighbours also holding Ikons so that God may send the wind the other way.

This is, of course, the standard of the poorest and most primitive, but far the most numerous, among the peasants of Russia! The few who are comparatively well-to-do enjoy an existence of patriarchal simplicity and comfort. In *Master and Man* Tolstoy gives us the following delightful glimpse of such a peasant's surroundings :

“ The family cultivated five ordinary lots and had other outlying land beside. There were six horses in the yard, three cows, and twenty head of sheep. The family consisted of twenty-two souls, including four married sons, six grandchildren (of whom one was married), two great-grandchildren, three orphans, and four daughters-in-law with their children. Over the table in the living-room hung the lamp from a high support, brightly illuminating the tea-service beneath it, the

water-bottle, the repast already set forth, and the brick walling of 'the beautiful corner' hung with Ikons, with pictures on each side of them."

This is a picture of a rich peasant's hut or house, but when we go down in the scale and reach the multitudinous landless, the home is a mere hovel (*isba*), often shared by the occupier and his family with another household as miserable and poverty-stricken as his own.

This land-hunger is, of course, no new emotion in the Russian peasant. It has eaten into the souls of his forbears through all time. In the earliest days when land was tribally owned it was still not his, and the communal distribution of harvests was unequal and led to autocracy. Later, when the tribal plan was cast aside and the *Mir* or commune was established, there came with it no accession of ownership and even less of personal freedom. What the *Mir* had, it held; the peasants were valued as its tributaries, and they were stopped from seeking happier fortune in other districts. They were chained to the land and became serfs of it. Not only could they not leave the *Mir*, but of course they were unable to dispose of the product of their labour to any other purchaser. Thus there was taken from them all incentive to progress and they remained just what they had begun, primitive men and very poor at that.

On the other hand the town workers

acquired the right of owning property, and slowly and steadily advanced in education, culture, and possessions. And from them and the nobles came the intellectuals.

The hopelessness of the general position even during the reign of Nicholas II was illuminated in the words of Pushkin :

“ In Russia there is no Law, but a pillar on which rests the Crown.”

At every point there was an impassable barrier that held all men in check. Long centuries before, when after a long conference on the banks of the Dnieper, the Council of the Sages invited the first Prince Rurik of Sweden to be their Lord, they said : “ Our land is great and rich, but of order there is none ; come and rule over us.” From him and the men who succeeded him they got order in varying degrees, but the rule was hard and stern. In the cities it was often otherwise. One thinks of Novgorod, Kieff, and even Moscow, where at different periods independence bloomed into something akin to republicanism :

“ If the Prince is a good one, feast him. If the Prince is a bad one, into the mud with him ! ”

Fine and brave city talk that, but a thing that not the stoutest dared have even whispered had he worked on the land. This ancient inequality between landmen and townsmen sowed the bitterness which has now come to harvest. Under the Revolution, the peasants have got their land and have

promptly falsified the essential Marxian formula: "From each according to his ability; to each according to his needs." They are content with casting loving eyes on their far-stretching acres, but all that they till is the bare amount that is necessary to supply food for themselves. The townsman was prosperous while they were starving; why should they toil so that they can send him food when there is nothing to be given in exchange?—a terrible blow for those genial optimists who never tire of assuring us that under Socialism everyone will be charming, unselfish, and the most loyal of workers simply for the reason that he is labouring for his fellows.

Russian life is full of riddles, tangles, divisions between classes, and violent subdivisions in one and the same class. Thus we find that the peasant is not only at enmity with the town-worker, but there is a feud between peasant and peasant. This is a disconcerting feature of the Russian experiment in Socialism, which has not merely failed to achieve class solidarity, but has demonstrated the futility of the brotherhood of man.

What has happened is this. The men on the land are fighting for the land for themselves, while their alleged comrades, the workers in the towns, are struggling to give effect to the creed of Socialism which will, they are sure, place at their disposal the products of the peasants' labour.

The peasants are passionately contending

for capitalism so long as they themselves remain the capitalists; the town-workers are clamouring for Socialism and the very necessary fruits of their comrades' labours in the fields. Which side will win?

It is ominous for the peasants that the Russian regime describes itself as "the Government of the workers and peasants," suggesting that the latter, in spite of the fact that they are by far the more numerous, are merely the junior partner. Even this status was the outcome of very hard bargaining. No revolution would have been of value to the peasant unless he got the land, and until 1917 the peasants, by decree of the Empire's Laws, formed a separate and absolutely distinct class. How, then, did the peasant succeed in obtaining the support of the town-workers in his land campaign, and what was he to give in return? "Equalised Land Tenure" was the demand, but it meant one thing to the townsman and quite a different thing to the countryman. With the townsman it meant communal ownership and production for general use; to the peasant it implied individual ownership and freedom to produce in such quantities as he pleased, for his own profit and advantage.

Machinery of sorts was devised to secure the townsman's objects. The land was placed under the control of the cantonal land committees and the district Soviet of peasant delegates. But the peasants are in possession and have every intention of re-

maining. They have an embarrassing disinclination to work hard and produce food for sale when they know that the price will never be paid them. Beyond this in many districts they are at present without transport facilities and are even without ploughs and other agricultural machinery.

The existing land situation and the emancipation of the peasantry from the toils of Socialism is, of course, a thing of dismay to Lenin, his Government, and the men of the towns. Realising that their only hope lies in sharply dividing the peasants, they have already made some progress to this end. They have discovered and brought into prominence a "poorest peasantry," which they are horrified to find is being oppressed by "Village Vultures,"¹ who are also peasants. It simply comes to this: while possessions are free they are unequal, and Lenin and the Socialists of the towns are exploiting this inequality in the belief that there will be uprisings to be followed by the expropriation of all and the vesting of all property in the State.

The "Village Vulture" is very nearly a fiction; he is only found in the proportion of one in 500 of the peasants: "the poorest peasantry" is of course a reality, but even then the poverty is merely a question of degree. The removal of one man in five hundred does not, however, necessitate a revolution in

¹ A phrase used by Lenin in his *Proletarian Revolution*, which has passed into common Russian phraseology.

every village, except on the principle that when anything has gone amiss you can always start a revolution and begin afresh on the ruins. The peasant does not mean to be governed by anyone if he can avoid it, and certainly not by a dictatorship of townsmen. He is realising his strength, and his present struggle is against "the poorest peasantry," who are supported by Soviet arms, and the inquisitorial activities of the "Committees of Poverty."

The expectation of the harvest and the remembrance of what happened last year, when "the poorest peasantry" appropriated the bulk of the harvest, are putting the land-workers on their guard. As likely as not they will take in their hands complete powers of separate government. Certainly they will attempt nothing less, and in the struggle that follows another bloody page of Russian history will be written.

CHAPTER III

THE BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE BOLSHEVIKS

BOLSHEVISM was born in London in the summer of 1903. It was an outcome of the charming recklessness with which we welcome dangerous and disreputable people to our country. It was born on the occasion of the meeting of the Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, held in a building in the East End.. In the course of the proceedings the first paragraph of the Party Rules was discussed. Martoff, the leader of what later became the "minority" (Mensheviki), proposed that "a member of the R.S.D.L. Party is anyone who recognises its programme, supports the party with funds, and regularly assists it personally under the direction of one of its organisations." At this Congress no less a person than Lenin was present, and he pressed an amendment to the effect that in addition to recognising the programme of the party and supporting it with funds, a member must take an active part in one of its organisations. This amendment obtained a majority of three, and thus

40 ~~THE~~ BOLSHIEVIK RUSSIA

the party that carried it became called "Bolsheviki" (the majority). This Congress was attended by the representatives of thirty-six local committees and groups, and of five Russian organisations.

It will be remembered that a revolution was attempted in Russia two years after Lenin's Congress in London. This revolution failed, but in May of the following year a Congress was held at Stockholm to formulate the basis for a fresh revolutionary struggle. The proletariat had not responded to the call in 1905, principally, it was believed, for the reason that it lacked confidence in the leaders. The Stockholm Conference was an important one. It sought to unite all the revolutionary organisations and to agree on a programme. It gave considerable attention to Russia's land problem. All the forces of Russia were to be linked up against the Tsar, a revolution was to take place, and a national assembly was to be summoned, elected by universal suffrage and a secret ballot. Russia's revolutionaries were in deadly earnest and full of activity. In May 1907 they came over to England and the London Congress took place. Three hundred and two delegates, elected by all the organised workers of Russia, honoured our city with their presence, and this Congress accepted in principle all the resolutions of the Stockholm Congress.

But if the revolutionaries were busy, the Tsar's Government and its agents were even more so. It became necessary to transplant

the whole of the revolutionary organisation to some place abroad, and Geneva was chosen. At the same time there was a heavy volume of "emigration" of Russian students and political offenders which filtered through to many continental cities, where the exiles formed their own groups and became active propagandists. The heads of the movement, however, seem also to have stayed in Geneva, where the Boksheviki were numerous enough to issue a weekly paper, the *Proletarii*, with an editorial committee, which consisted of Lenin, Bogdanoff, Lunatcharsky, Alexinsky, and Dubrovinsky. The Mensheviki, who also flocked to Geneva, issued a periodical of their own called *The Voice of the Social Democrat*. Geneva must have been a lively centre to live in.

If one peruses the columns of these papers during this period one finds but little enlightenment. Each was aimed at the other and both were full of personal abuse. The pioneers of the Russian Revolution were very much of the same type which manned the Fabian Society in this country; they were not members of the working-class, and some of them were gentlemen who merely lived on their wits. Lenin, for instance, an hereditary nobleman, the son of a Privy Councillor of the Simbirsk province and a lawyer, was born in 1870. He had a college education at his birthplace and then entered the Kazan University. In the same year he was expelled for taking part in student disturbances and

was forbidden to live in Kazan. He spent the next three years in studying revolutionary literature. He devoted himself especially to Marx, and in 1891 entered the Petrograd University and at once wrote largely for the revolutionary Press. It appears that since 1888 this gentleman had been largely maintained on the party funds of the revolutionary movement, though in addition he received certain allowances from his mother, who was a lady of property. His brother Alexander had the misfortune to be hanged for his share in a terrorist plot. Lenin's wife, who is an active co-worker with him in the Bolshevik administration, is a Polish lady who has tasted exile in Siberia. Lenin left the Petrograd University in 1895 and went abroad, but he was none the less the leader of the most extreme section of the Russian revolutionaries. Professor Peter Struve,¹ who has known Lenin intimately, has recently written the following description of him: "He has no moral criterion, and is ready to utilise, for the achievement of his aims, all and every means and to travel by the darkest alleys and byways. Let us keep in mind the relations of this Maximalist with the German police, without whose aid Lenin's activity before and during the war would have had no basis or foundation. I assert that the psychological and metaphysical essence of Lenin as a historic figure consists in the fact

¹ Formerly a Marxian Socialist and Professor of History at Moscow University.

that the doctrine of the class struggle is combined in Lenin with a cold, personal bitterness and total scorn for the morality of ways and means. Lenin is the synthesis of the idea of communism based upon the class struggle, blended with a personal viciousness bordering on moral perversion. That is why he is the representative figure of Bolshevism. He is, it must be stated, a theorist and even an idealist of the purest water."

With the outbreak of the world war the struggle between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks was only intensified. The former took the view that the war had come and could not be stopped. The Bolsheviks, however, maintained that the war was being waged by the capitalists of all countries for the annexation of territory. It was a capitalists' war and it must be ended. Beyond this the Bolsheviks had a very practical plan for securing the overthrow of their country. We quote from a remarkable pamphlet written in Russian, published in Siberia before the German Revolution of 1918, translated into English and now on sale in this country—*The Aims of the Bolsheviks*, by H. Shumiatzki :

" The Bolsheviks looked upon the fraternising of the proletarians of all countries in the trenches as one of the most effective weapons in the struggle for peace. They made full use of this weapon, which had already initiated the revolutionary movement in Austria and

Germany, to crush which the capitalists of these countries launched the last offensive against peaceful cities. The Bolsheviki say that this offensive is one of the last spasmodic efforts of capitalism."

(It should be understood clearly that the Russian Revolution of March 1917 aimed at the overthrow of German influence in Russia, and was not a Bolshevik movement, either in its inception or early development. The Bolshevik leaders, when once the Revolution was a success and had swept the Government that had driven them out of Russia into exile, speedily returned. They had not overthrown Tsarism; it had been left to the people to do that, and they returned to exploit a popular revolution and foist their ideas of a new system of society upon the country.)

When the Bolsheviks returned they found German sympathisers and agents waiting to welcome and help them to the utmost. The development of Bolshevism was to be Germany's high policy in Russia, and such indeed it became.

In drawing up their plan of action for the world war, Germany and her allies had counted on their ability to defeat France in the field before the Russian mobilisation could be completed. In this they failed, not only because of the unexpected vigour of the Belgian resistance, coupled with the swift entry of Great Britain into the war, but also

as the result of the rapidity of Russian mobilisation. The battle of the Marne brought with it the doom of Germany's hopes, unless she could divide the Allies and secure a separate peace. This hope again was frustrated by the Pact of London under which the Allies pledged themselves not to make peace except by universal consent. Germany was thus brought to a desperate position, and we must trace her handling of it as evidenced by events which occurred in the various countries that were hostile to her.

First she turned to France. Germany found there that the great mass of the French people realised that their future depended upon the absolute defeat of Germany and that no compromise was possible. German agents, however, discovered that there was a small group, composed chiefly of cosmopolitan financiers, who felt that they could create a situation favourable to their personal interests if they could by a *coup d'état* seize the reins of French government, and bring about a peace with Germany on the basis of the *status quo* as in July 1914. We all remember that *status quo* agitation, and the support which it secured in certain quarters in this country. We were told that it would be immensely to our advantage; that the war would otherwise be prolonged and be terribly costly in life and treasure; and that even at best its final issue would be gravely uncertain. At this time Germany's friends and agents were very busy in France; the

attempt to overthrow the French Government was made through the agency of the Italian and French secret societies. The plot was a very serious one, but happily it was discovered before it came to fruition, and was completely frustrated.

In Great Britain, Germany became equally busy. The only effective method of attacking England was through the trade unions and kindred workmen's societies. In this campaign the Germans realised that the ordinary trade-union official was too patriotic and sensible to lead the country to defeat by a general strike in war time, so the enemy propaganda was centred on individual workshops and districts and was directed to the origination of the largest number possible of small strikes in vital war industries, fortunately without much success, but creating a feeling of general unrest throughout the country.

When we come to Russia we find that there German agents made their supreme effort and found countless allies and supporters. In Russia, Germans from Germany, and their compatriots living in Russia, were in direct or indirect control of practically all the banking concerns throughout the Empire. In the early weeks of the war these people had been employed by Germany for espionage, and later they developed extraordinary usefulness in propaganda work. The thing Germany had to do was to create in Russia a profound unrest that would certainly lead up to an

upheaval. This was easily done. The first step was to produce a food shortage, and food in large quantities was bought and deliberately hidden away.¹ The poor were driven to starvation, and the violent indignation that resulted from this cynical brutality led up to and culminated in the revolution under which the Tsar was dethroned. At first that revolution was orderly and national, which was not at all to the liking of Germany's friends and supporters in Russia. {A body of extreme propagandists, with Lenin at their head, were brought into Russia in sealed carriages and plunged the whole country into a cauldron. The overthrow of the Kerensky Government in 1917 brought into power a gang of fanatics and adventurers, the chief representatives of whom were Lenin, Trotsky (who was born under the name of Braunstein), Steklov (otherwise known as Nahamkes), and Zinovieff (originally Apfelbaum). These men found their work only too easy. The Russian intelligentsia was demoralised. The Kerensky Government had been weak and vacillating to a degree, and discipline in the army was a thing of the past. Setting out to achieve the objects of their "ideals" and the aims entrusted to them by Berlin, the newcomers devoted themselves to the propagation of a separate peace, as a means of obtaining bread. Germany, of course, knew how unfathomable was the political and

¹ See the famous speeches of M. Miliukoff in the Duma, during October 1916.

economic ignorance of the masses of the Russian people, and realised that a separate peace with Russia would help her in the west. Whilst the doctrines of communism preached by Lenin and his followers would, they knew, result in a rush of brute force and lawlessness and swiftly bring the country to disaster.

The Bolshevik leaders themselves can be divided into two classes, idealists and adventurers. Some of them are Jews, hiding under a Russian alias and taking a revengeful toll for their centuries of oppression ; others are Letts, Poles, Armenians, or members of the other conquered races. They were confronted at the start with a curious problem. It was vital to them that they should have the full support of the Russian proletariat. They found, however, that scarcely more than 3% of the Russian people belonged to the proletariat proper in the sense that they lived by the product of their manual labour. More than half of the workmen in Russian factories still retained their little land in their native villages. This 3% were almost entirely absorbed into the Soviet system as officials. The new rulers were left with the peasantry, an equally perplexing problem, for the peasants were small-holders and bourgeois at heart and were out of sympathy with Communist principles. Indeed the peasants had been in repeated revolt against the Soviet Government as the consequence of forceful commandeering of produce. So Lenin's Government was driven to rely for its power

on force, and it organised the Red Army, which at first, immediately after the conclusion of the Peace of Brest-Litovsk, was placed on a voluntary basis. In August 1918, however, compulsory military service was installed. This Red Army is composed of a million and a half men and is principally used for the terrorising of the rural districts. It is only kept together by merciless discipline and anti-White propaganda. It is officered by ex-officers of the former Imperial Army, compulsorily commissioned and sternly dragooned, and by many ex-German officers. The strength of the Bolshevik position really lies in the fact that no one who opposes the Soviets can live.

Before their entry into power the Bolsheviks began to permeate the army and the workers. Russia's only chance was to avoid disunion and achieve some swift form of organisation. The Bolsheviks knew this, Lenin had actually preached it; had he not said on May 1st, 1917, "the country if disorganised will soon be famine-stricken?" Yet in spite of this knowledge of what the result of their labours must be, Lenin passionately led his Bolsheviks to complete the national disorganisation and brought famine to the doors of the people. Mr. Phillips Price, on page 6 of *The Origin and Growth of the Soviets*, has described to us exactly what did happen, and it should be remembered that Mr. Price is a witness of strong Bolshevik prepossessions. We quote his words: "Chaos increased.

One group of workmen often struggled with another group in the attempt to get hold of the much-needed raw materials. Meanwhile famine became worse and worse, and the Workers' Soviets were in danger of turning into Committees for getting whatever they could get for their own members." Mr. Price is careful not to concede that this was a result of Bolshevism. Trotsky, however, in his book, *From the Revolution to Brest-Litovsk*, has no such illusion. He attributes all these deplorable results to Bolshevik propaganda, and in support of his view Zinovieff and others are of the opinion that it was in the summer of 1917 that most of the Bolshevik work was done. The disorganisation of the Russian Army was soon an accomplished fact; and the "emancipation" of the soldiery once achieved, the way was clear to the Peace of Brest-Litovsk. This was a Bolshevik triumph indeed, placing Russia's neck under the heel of her enemies. In another passage we set out the full cost to Russia of the Bolshevik peace. That cost, however, is measured merely in terms of territory and of money. The real effects of that peace will be felt in the homes of Russia for many generations to come, and the Bolsheviks are responsible for it. Having demoralised the soldiery and handed over great tracts of their country to the enemy, the Bolsheviks pressed on to demoralise the peasants. The Red Guards and The Red Terror were invaluable aids and accessories

in the production of widespread chaos. The Bolsheviks themselves admit that they came into power on a wave of anarchy; it is unfortunate that their candour does not extend to the further admission that their doctrines, stealthily and persistently inculcated as they were into all classes of society, produced that anarchy.

The year 1917 was an exceedingly busy one for Lenin and his friends who had swept into power for the emancipation of Russia. On November 7th of that year they made their *coup d'état* (which must be carefully distinguished from the *revolution* that dethroned the Tsar in March) and took over the government. From that day their regime began, and the flood of decrees flowed endlessly. On November 8th they issued a land decree, which provided that "private property and landed estates were abolished," and all estates and lands, private, imperial, monastic, and ecclesiastical, with all the dead and live stock, and all buildings and offices, were handed over to the Cantonal Land Committees and District Soviets of Peasant Deputies. Under this ordinance all land is alienated without compensation and becomes the property of the people for the enjoyment and possession of those who work upon it, meaning of course the peasants only. On the same day complete freedom of agitation at the front was proclaimed in the decree abolishing the death penalty in the army. On November 9th the newspapers were sternly taken in hand. The

new Government did not intend to tolerate any criticism, and a decree was issued suppressing newspapers which incited their readers to rebellion against or insubordination to the Workmen's and Peasants' Government. Lenin was wise enough to foresee that strong measures would require strong support, and on November 10th he issued a decree ordering the local Soviets to form a Workers' Militia. As a sop to those who might be alarmed by this unexpected development he decreed on the following day a universal eight-hour day for all workers employed for hire. On November 21st he decreed that none but the Workers' and Peasants' Government might publish advertisements, thus obviously seeking to nip opposition in the bud. On November 23rd the pensions of workers disabled through accidents were increased by 100% as from January 1st, 1917. On the same day there was an important decree abolishing all civil grades, all class distinctions and titles, and all grades of rank, placing everybody on an equality with the common title of citizen.

By November 15th profiteers were laid by the heels, and they were threatened by a decree with arrest and confinement in the prison of Kronstadt. One might point out that in spite of Lenin and his followers, or as some aver in consequence of them, the profiteer is still a busy and successful person in Russia. On November 29th Lenin indulged in yet another decree on the lines of social reform. He transferred without compensation all the

medical establishments attached to factories to the management committee of Workers' Sick Funds. When no such establishment existed the owners of factories and workshops were to find the money to bring them into being. It was on the same day that perhaps the most important and most disastrous of all Lenin's decrees was issued. It provided for the establishment of Workers' Control in all Industrial, Commercial, Banking, Agricultural, and Transport concerns, and similarly in all co-operative and other associated efforts of production.

The workers, through their representatives, were placed in control over the production, purchase, and sale of all materials and manufactured articles as well as over the financial side of the concerns in question. In a later passage we will analyse the results that followed this decree. In these days, when in this country there is a loud-voiced demand for exactly the same change, it will be of advantage to all of us to see what disaster this mad provision brought to Russia.

On December 1st, 1917, there was a whole budget of decrees, many of them amusingly fantastic. Commissions in the army were abolished and pay for officers and men was equalised. Another decree fixed the salaries of the Commissars, who were the organising agents in the country of the new Government, at 500 roubles a month, with an addition of 100 roubles for every member of their family unable to work. There was another decree

which had subsequently much to do with the oppression of the common people, as it gave to local Soviets the right to impose taxes. The last decree issued on this memorable day was one that abolished all the existing law courts.

On December 11th a decree was issued abolishing the Land Bank, the Nobles' and Peasants' Banks, and another on the same day dismissing all the Ambassadors, Consuls, and Members of Embassies abroad. On December 13th all agricultural machinery, manufactured or in the course of manufacture, or in the course of importation from abroad, was declared to be a monopoly of the Government. On December 15th a decree ordered that officers of the army were to be elected by the men and all distinction of rank in the army was to be ended. On December 18th the Supreme National Economic Council was established. On December 25th the Cossacks were relieved from military service. On the same day another decree set up the Workers' Council for the control of everything connected with insurance. The following day there was a decree for the compulsory insurance of workers, and a second decree granted 2,000,000 roubles (worth at the rate of exchange then prevailing about £20,000) to advance the international movement, the first of a long series of such subsidies. We wonder how many of those roubles have found their way to this country.

The distribution of the fund has, of course,

been hidden from the public eye with the utmost secrecy, but it is, to say the least, unlikely that Great Britain has been overlooked.

On December 29th the sale of textile products by private individuals direct from factories and workshops was forbidden.

The Bolsheviks opened the New Year (1918) with a decree of January 1st that makes divorce as easy as it is apparently popular. Divorce is now granted in a civil court on the mere demand of either party. On the same day a decree established a revolutionary press tribunal. On January 2nd Lenin returned to matrimonial problems. Marriage was made a civil contract under the Soviet, and marriage by church officials was no longer valid. It was about this time that the Soviet Declaration of Rights was published. It will be noticed, however, that the document was identical with that adopted by the Third Congress. Before we set out this Declaration we should like to generalise the decrees. They represent a spasmodic effort to create an ideal state under what was nothing less than a dictatorship. They were no doubt the result of bargains and bribes to make various sections happy; the peasantry for instance got the land, soldiers received more pay, were relieved of their old officers and became eligible for commissions themselves by election. The teaching class received upwards of 12,500,000 roubles to sweeten their attitude towards

Lenin and his lieutenants. With regard to the peasants the land was given for the possession and enjoyment of those who worked on it. In fairness to Lenin it should be stated that this was not at all his honest solution of the agrarian problem. He stated his position quite frankly in the following words :

1. "Having overthrown Tsardom and Militarism, the peasantry was dreaming of equalising land tenure and no power on earth would have been able to cure this dream of the peasantry." In a later passage he added : "The proletarians were saying to the peasants, 'We shall help you to attain the ideal form of capitalism (since the equalisation of land tenure is the ideal form of capitalism from the point of view of the small producer), but by doing so we shall demonstrate to you its inadequacy.' " The result has been that the peasant has got his land and is so abundantly satisfied with casting his eye over his unexpected possession that he grows only enough food for himself and those about him. It is the workers in the towns who have gone short and who no doubt very acutely feel now the inadequacy of Lenin's land scheme.

Lenin again was scandalously wrong in letting loose agitators amongst the soldiery at the front. This resulted, as the veriest fool should have anticipated, in the complete breakdown of Russian military resistance, and was followed by a surrender to Germany

which was not merely ignominious, but was also disastrous to the whole Russian people, as the terms of Brest-Litovsk clearly prove.

The general results of Lenin's experiments are now apparent.

When we turn to commerce, we are faced with a lamentable situation. The card system has been introduced, and this, coupled with the prohibition of the free exchange of goods, has produced colossal speculation. Government money is practically valueless, owing to the issue of fabulous quantities of paper notes, uncovered by gold reserves and guaranteed by no one who counts. Such trade as remains is secret in nature and really amounts to barter. The peasants, for instance, in the comparatively few cases where they produce more than they consume, exchange bread, milk, and other eatables for clothing, jewellery, and even furniture, from the towns. In some commodities there is still a surplus, and in this category we might safely place flax and leather. But there is only a surplus of these things for the reason that the Russians are without the plant and appliances of manufacture. Even so, though they need the latter and would willingly give the former to secure them, they are unable to do business with the outside world. They urgently need rolling stock and the other appliances of industry, but they have nothing, to give in exchange; they are, of course, entirely without credit, and the Soviet Govern-

ment is unable to formulate any acceptable system of international trading.

Writers and speakers who declaim about the iniquities of the recent blockade forget that even had the gates of Russia been open no business could have been done, simply for the reason that there were and are no guarantees for the satisfactory completion of the business. At the present moment it would be ridiculous even to talk of Russian industry. It simply does not exist; the only factories at work, and they are quite few, are locomotive and artillery repair shops, and a few electrical companies and undertakings producing Government papers and documents.

Of course, the destruction of Russian industry began in the summer of 1918, when the need of coal and raw materials was first acutely felt. This, however, was only one of the causes of the collapse which was inevitably precipitated by the Bolshevik Revolution, whose leaders demonstrated their incapacity for rule by removing all the capable and experienced mechanics and engineers from the important work that they were doing. In their place, so that Soviet principles could be conformed to, "Factory Committees" were put in charge. These rough and quite ignorant workmen assumed control of the various industries. In a very short time engines and plant had been damaged, and in some cases ruined, and the control of work became simply chaotic. Young men and women vied with one another in proving their

incapacity for a task beyond their knowledge and training. Large numbers of hopeless workers saw that trouble was coming, downed their tools, and quietly left for their villages to escape the food crisis. When the supply of coal ran out a series of efforts was made to replace it with other fuel. The furnaces, however, had not been constructed on those lines and the efforts failed. By the time that December had come, a Bolshevik newspaper in Petrograd was in a position to announce that 300 factories had been closed owing to the lack of fuel, and many of them were important, not only for the reason that they employed large numbers of hands, but also because they had been relied on to produce essential commodities for the people. Meanwhile heavy blows had been dealt in rapid succession at the various Workers' Organisations. Politics took the place of technical qualifications, and the Communist leaders dominated the elections of candidates and even resorted under opposition to force of arms.

The workers lost their eight-hour day, if only for the reason that, where work did remain available, the men had to toil overtime in order to get sufficient money to enable them to exist. Thus in the autumn of 1918 Russia was plunged into a vortex of political strikes. Simultaneously with the growth of internal and domestic trouble, the autocracy of the bewildered and baffled Soviet leaders increased. The presence in the towns of

many thousands of idle workmen, all more or less on the verge of starvation, was a constant terror to the Government. The only course to take was to deport them to the provinces, and a specious excuse was promptly discovered. More hands, it was announced, were required for the gathering of the harvest. Seeing, however, that such harvest as there was had already been gathered in, the explanation was more ingenious than ingenuous. The unfortunate men were promised that they would be fed well when once they reached the wilderness of rural Russia, and would receive substantial pay. In March 1920 the exiled townsmen were still waiting for that pay, and were still in the country, but they were of no value to the country as they knew little or nothing about work on the land. One thing they did, however, and it brought evil on the whole of Russia. During the winter time they ate up the seeds, with the result that there were none left for sowing purposes when the spring came.

It seems unlikely that even the complete failure of their administration, attended though it has been by unparalleled misery amongst their victims, will deter the Bolshevik leaders from pressing forward with their political aims. Their great and seemingly unshakable intention is to bring about a world-wide socialist revolution. The Soviet of Peoples Commissars is busily agitating in all the countries of the world. Whatever the cost, Communism is to be established every-

where. It is of vital importance to the Soviets to capture and dominate the immediately neighbouring countries of Finland and Poland, which form a barrier between Soviet Russia and Western Europe. There is reason to believe that propaganda work is being done even as far away as India, and vast sums are being spent on the spread of Communism throughout the world. This well may be a policy of sheer despair, resulting in some measure from the desperate state of Russian finance. The following notes are in circulation: Tsar roubles, Duma roubles, Kerensky roubles, and Soviet roubles, all with different market values. A thousand Tsar roubles are equal, for instance, to anything from 7,000 to 10,000 Soviet roubles.

The Government meanwhile sternly control all the trade that is left. They are assisted by the co-operatives, who have been appointed by them to distribute the food; but, as the most stalwart supporters of the Soviets have been given work in the co-operative institutions, they feed themselves, their families and their friends first, and leave the unhappy public to suffer.

Those of us who have observed with the deepest concern the situation with regard to Poland, and the Soviet advance to join hands with Germany, will in no way be surprised to learn that the Germans are the only friends that the Bolsheviki have in Europe. When some little while ago the Soviet of Peoples Commissars were driven to the conclusion

that the organisation and strategic work of the Bolshevik General Staff was inferior, they appealed to the Germans for help. A special contingent of the German General Staff arrived in Moscow, and its members have been increasingly in control of the vital plan of campaign ever since.

We might describe at this point the system of Bolshevik rule. It is characteristic of the Russian people to give pet names to the most horrible institutions. Thus the infamous secret police force was named Okhranka (Little Watch), while its successor, the present "Extraordinary Commission for Fighting Counter-Revolution, Speculation and Sabotage," is called Tchrezvytchayka, i.e. the diminutive for "Extraordinary One." In the Northern Commune of Petrograd this sinister body occupies a large building on the corner of the Gorokhovaya. On the stairs of the building, in readiness for immediate use, are a number of machine guns, and in the yard there is a fleet of motor cars. These are used for the purpose of making arrests, on which occasions they are manned by armed militia. The entrance of the building is patrolled by sentinels heavily armed, and in the reception rooms a bold notice meets the visitor's eye forbidding revolvers to be drawn. The chief directors of this modern inquisition are Ezherzhinski, a Pole, and Peters, a Lett (Peters, by the way, is already well known to the British public). Among the militia are

many foreigners, Hungarians, Poles, Austrians, and even Chinese; there are also women, including many Germans and the terrible Lettish woman Krause, who is married to a German. This institution has recently been strengthened and has now the assistance of the notorious military revolutionary courts. Its activity has been extended to all parts of Russia. The number of arrests and executions increases almost daily. In the towns the Commission has its secret police, spies, and agents provocateurs. The Soviet loves this Commission and invests it with special privileges and rights. Its procedure is to send and arrest a victim against whom information has been laid. Should the individual "wanted" not be found, the other inmates of the house are arrested, and they are delivered to the Commissary for examination. On his orders they are normally either taken outside to be shot or sent to prison until the original victim is found. A very recent decree by an ingenious amendment makes the house-soviet of each building responsible instead of the inmates as a whole.

The Soviet Government has utterly failed to organise the interior life of the country. The abolition of private enterprise has turned Russia into a State of mediaeval stagnation. Freedom of trade for the individual is intolerable to the Bolsheviks, and the Soviets have failed to carry on trade without private enterprise. They employ myriads of officials who are quite incompetent, and there is no

country in the world where bribery, corruption, and thieving are so universal.

The State is lifeless and bureaucratic; it is governed by police methods, instigated by a single party, and opposition is mercilessly suppressed. By far the greater part of the population loathes the Soviet Government, to which it is in complete slavery. Loyalty is dissembled in order to escape from arrest or death.

From the standpoint of popular welfare, the future outlook is even worse than the present. The food crisis is becoming more and more acute and threatens nothing less than starvation for the whole country. This is due not only to a failure of distribution, owing to a breakdown in transport, but primarily and apparently irretrievably to under-production. Trains run only a few times a week and that on the main lines alone. They burn wood fuel owing to the scarcity of coal. Great difficulty is caused by the lack even of oil. Imagine a lack of oil in Russia! It is only fair to say that desperate efforts are being made to relieve the chaos on the railways, but the lack of rolling stock and raw materials, as well as of suitable fuel, makes the achievement of this impossible for the ill-equipped men who control Russia's destinies to-day. When one realises that, in *spite of* the fact that Russia is covered with immense forests, fuel cannot be obtained, one understands how complete is the incapacity of the administrators of Soviet rule to obtain

necessary work from the people. Notwithstanding the utmost efforts, the exploitation of the forests only brought in some 10% of the total fuel necessary for the functioning of the railways and the most essential branches of industry. Indeed Commissar Rykov, who is in charge of the fuel supply, has been obliged to turn to private enterprise and make contracts with private persons. It has been seriously proposed that the whole population between the ages of 17 and 50 should be mobilised for purposes of this kind. To supply the immediate deficiency, 20,000 wooden houses in the capital alone were some months marked down for demolition. Thus it will be apparent that in the case of one of the most elementary necessities of national life the Soviet Government has failed to organise and supply the need.

CHAPTER IV

LENIN AND LABOUR IN RUSSIA

HAVING established himself in power, Lenin's first necessity was to give effect to the doctrines and proposals that have played so great a part in the speeches and propaganda of himself and his followers. Before this time there had been a trade-union movement in Russia. Like all other progressive movements in that country, it had in its inception been secret, and economic and political issues had been closely associated in its development. The revolutionary outbreak in 1905 gave a great stimulus to trade unionism, for it was then that the right of association was won. From time to time the administration certainly did shut down unions with a high hand, but new bodies were at once formed, and even those that had been the victims of an official onslaught remained in being and continued their work by underground methods. It will be remembered that just before the outbreak of war, in 1912-13, there was an enormous strike activity in Russia. During 1912 over a million workmen

struck and a million and a half in 1913. It was in the latter year that political strikes became so notable. This movement was at times quite violent, and a strong impetus was given to it by the shooting of the workers at Lena, where no fewer than 500 were killed and wounded. This brutal incident fired the imagination of the Russian workers, and protest strikes began in the south and gradually spread all over Russia. There were strikes on May Day, and Russian labour men very largely adopted the principles of direct action, their main objective being economic improvement.

Thus it came about that not only did the trade unions increase in numbers, but also in strength. Just before the war there were no fewer than 16,000 trade unionists in Petrograd alone, a significant number in Russia, although their membership was small compared to ours and at first only comprised the most daring amongst the workers. It should be remembered that the unions were denied the right to issue their own newspapers and were in consequence handicapped in making rapid progress, while Russian laws prohibited the federation of unions and all the leaders were marked men. Naturally, therefore, the first thing that any Government that succeeded the Tsar would do would be to give full liberty to trade unions and even help in their development. The Provisional Government did so, with the result that the Russian trade-union movement leapt up in

a day from its underground insignificance and assumed vast proportions. Lenin, when he returned from exile, was delighted, and proceeded at once to use these great organisations for the development and support of Bolshevism.

Very rapidly the trade unions had their awakening. At the "All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions," which was held in Petrograd in January 1918, Lenin was the spokesman of the Communist Party and blandly proposed "to convert the trade unions into State institutions." He airily pointed out that the work of the trade unions as such was finished. "The trade unions," he said, "can now commence the work of the construction of a new economic life of the State out of all that was created out of the capitalist culture, building up Socialism on the material basis of the latter. The conversion of trade unions into State institutions is inevitable. They are bound to be moulded into one with the organs of the Soviet Government."

It is clear that Lenin does not believe in the freedom of the workers. He merely recognises in them a body that should be well dragooned into the support of his own personal methods. There was a very strong opposition to Lenin's view in the Congress, and an amendment was moved to the effect that "the conversion of trade unions into organs of the Government will do immense harm to the workers. The State may have interests

which clash with those of the working-classes, and therefore the proletariat cannot turn the unions, which are its organs of defence, into appendages of the Government. The trade unions must retain their freedom and be independent of everybody except their own members."

Lenin had a powerful supporter in Zinovieff, who is now the President of the Moscow International. In his book, *The Communist Party and Industrial Unionism*,¹ Zinovieff writes: "According to Sydney Webb the aim of Trade Unionism is to maintain and increase the standard of wages. Brentano and Sombart say the object is to subsidise the members in time of strike and to safeguard their interests by increasing their wages. Adolph Braun says the object is the organisation in permanent guilds or trade unions of wage earners for the purposes of securing the amelioration of working conditions." "To this," replies Zinovieff, "the Bolshevik Party has never given its adherence." He continues: "There is a dark side to the activity of the unions. For example, some branches of the Dock Labourers' Union on the Volga support the wage demand of their short-sighted individual members without even having helped the Soviets in their fight against the incredible thefts which have been committed by the dockyard workers. These men have proved that they are behind the times and that they are incapable of rising

¹ Published by the British Socialist Party, London.

above the narrow interest of their group." This was really very amusing. The dockyard workers, who had been committing these incredible thefts, were directly employed and paid by the Soviet. It was only because the Soviet paid them so very badly that they thieved in order to live. Zinovieff proceeds to develop his views : " When these associations take up the demand for their members, they forget that they no longer have to deal with employers, but with the Proletarian State, and this proves their trade-union narrowness." Zinovieff adds : " The fight against the negative parties [the negative parties are those who ask for more money and better conditions than seem to the Commissary, in his wisdom, desirable] of the working-class movement is one of the chief duties of the Communist in the Union."

A revolution that fails to bring freedom is a sorry sort of thing. It is a trick that revolutions often have. But a revolution to introduce Socialism which only results in individual bondage to the new Socialist authority is a warning to the whole world. Russia now has a code of labour laws. This code was not framed by the trade unions, but by the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic and promulgated by the People's Commissariat of Justice. According to paragraph 2 of the Introduction this code of laws " concerns all persons receiving remuneration for their work."

Let us set out Section 1, paragraph 1 :

(1) "All citizens of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic are subject to compulsory labour. (2) The following are exempt : (a) Persons under 16 years of age ; (b) All persons over 50 years of age ; (c) Persons who cannot work (mutilation or illness). Temporary exemptions are granted to (a) People who are ill, until they recover, and (b) Pregnant women, eight weeks before and eight weeks after confinement.

Of course the Russian citizen is not to decide for himself whether he is ill or not. To obtain exemption he must go to the bureau of medical survey and get a certificate. Our soldiers will understand what this means, and will sympathise with their Russian comrades, who, as likely as not, will be certified for "medicine and duty." This is the pinnacle of freedom to which Socialism has brought Russia. In this benighted country of ours a worker can choose for himself ; if he himself believes that he is not well enough for work he can stay at home, but under the Socialist Federal Soviet Republic he has to do what he is told. Another regulation which would be amusing, were it not so oppressive, reads : "Persons who are bound to execute compulsory labour, and are not engaged in useful public work, can be compulsorily summoned by the local soviets for the execution of public work on conditions determined by the Department of Labour in agreement with the local soviets of professional unions." Here is an amazing coil of restrictions and regulations.

All have to work, and the miserable workman can be compulsorily summoned by his soviet, which in turn can be compulsorily summoned by the Department of Labour, and between them they have to compulsorily discover what is or is not useful public work.

And no one is to be allowed to strike. The weapon of Labour's defence is rudely torn from Labour's hand. Russian workmen struck in the old days against private Russian employers for the improvement of their conditions. If those employers were autocratic, infinitely greater autocrats have taken their place. The new tyrant is no less a tyrant for the reason that he is grandiloquently described as "The People's Commissioner of Labour." Behind him he has the whole force and power of the State, and can ruthlessly break any strike and sternly punish any striker. But the State is not the people. The State is a remote, inaccessible, and highly organised group consisting of Lenin and his highly placed followers, who are engaged on an extremely hazardous socialistic experiment and will allow no nonsense to imperil their own position. It is well to realise once and for all that the grip of the soviet is on the whole of Russia, and the soviet is in Lenin's grip. The Department of Labour Distribution, which ordains for every single worker what he shall do and how much he shall do of it, is controlled solely by Lenin and a few autocrats. There is no appeal against its decision. It has introduced a condition of serfdom more

abject than anything recorded in the previous history of Russia. Why do not the Labour orators who declaim of freedom under the Red Flag make known these facts to their British audiences? Why should British workers be bamboozled into the lie that their Russian comrades have found freedom under Lenin? No one can challenge the genuineness or the meaning of the following Russian regulation: "A transfer connected with the removal of a wage-earner to another enterprise in the same or a different place is carried out by a corresponding organ of management with the consent of the Department of Labour Distribution." So you see the poor fellow can be bundled about from job to job, or from town to town, quite irrespective of his own wishes. It is true that he can complain to the People's Commissary of Labour, but he has to find him first; and when he has found him, he has to get him to listen to him, and before he goes to find him he has to get permission to leave his work; and once the great man decides, there is a special provision to safeguard *his* comfort, for he "is not to be liable for further complaints."

There are protests in this country against what is called wage-slavery; why do not our Labour speakers tell us about Russia's work-slavery? In Russia these autocratic officials have limitless power "to transfer workers from the organisation where they are working to another in the same or another place if there

should not be found a sufficient number of persons *willing of their own accord* to complete any particular work." This, of course, simply means that any man anywhere can be compelled to throw up a job of his liking and ordered at the sweet will of an official to pack up and to go and spend his life in any nasty, dangerous, or humiliating task that may be chosen for him.

As to wages, they are not determined by either individual or collective bargaining. They are settled by the labour commissioners, and if they be not just or sufficient the workers must accept them or desert and starve. There is a provision that "Persons who receive additional remuneration, regardless of the decision of Article 65, are held guilty of criminal deceit, and the remuneration received over the standard tariff is subject to deduction from the next remuneration." This opens up a promising prospect, but it is never realised. Wages are on a dead level, without any incentive for the worker to give of his best. There is not a man living in Russia to-day under the Soviet Republic who can make special provision, whatever the emergency, for the family he loves, as the direct result of his own good hard work.

Compulsory labour in Russia came gradually. The first experiment in this direction was made by the High Command of the Red Army, on December 10th, 1919, when the Revolutionary Military Council of the Re-

public issued a decree setting up on all fronts and in all provinces mixed executive Commissions to undertake the supply of wood for the railways. Soon no fewer than sixty of these Commissions were called into being. It cannot be said, however, that the compulsory supply was a great success. Still the need was urgent, and, acting on a report from Trotsky, the Central Committee of the Russian Communist party, ignoring the Soviets, adopted the principle and mobilised the industrial workers on a compulsory basis. Towards the close of December 1919, the Council of People's Commissars set up a mixed Commission presided over by Trotsky to draw up the compulsory-labour programme. The Commissars of Labour, Railways, and Roads, the Interior, Food, Agriculture, and War were members, and there sat with them the Presidents of the Council of National Economy and of the Central Council of Professional Alliances. A very striking step was taken on January 13th, 1920, when, acting on the Commission's report, the Council of National Defence transformed the third Red Army into the first Revolutionary Labour Army. The decree provided that the third army was to be employed as an undivided unit, thus maintaining military discipline in industrial work, and it was to supply wood and food and labour on the roads, etc. We now set out a careful translation of the actual decree on compulsory labour as signed by Lenin himself :

DECREE ON COMPULSORY LABOUR

(Verified Translation signed by Lenin and issued by him for Publication in Great Britain)

(1) The following arrangements, based on compulsory general labour, shall be put into effect :

- (a) The population capable of work, irrespective of their permanent professional occupations, shall be called to a temporary or periodic employment on all sorts of compulsory work on heating, rural economy, the building of houses, work on the roads, food supply, the removal of snow, horse transport, and the consequences of the general state of pressure of the country.
 - (b) The Labour Force in the Red Army and in the Fleet shall be used for the same object.
 - (c) Skilled workmen shall be withdrawn from the Army, and persons occupied in agricultural or industrial undertakings shall be transferred to work on State undertakings and institutions.
 - (d) All unoccupied persons everywhere shall be placed on permanent work.
 - (e) The necessary redistribution of the Labour Force shall be carried out.
- (2) The general direction of the introduction

of compulsory labour shall be handed over to the National Defence Council.

(3) A Grand Committee for Compulsory Work shall be formed, directly subordinate to the Defence Council, and composed of Representatives of the Commissariats of Labour, of the Interior, and of War. Local, regional, and district Committees, and, where necessary, Municipal Committees, shall be formed, subordinate to the Executive Committees of the respective Soviets, and composed of representatives of the Commissariat of War, of the section of Civil Administration, and of that of Labour.

(4) The Defence Council shall be charged to publish all instructions mentioned in paragraph 1 of the present decree, and shall give the local Executive Committees the right to mobilise their respective population.

(5) (A) The District Regional and Municipal Committees shall take legal proceedings against persons convicted—

- (a) Of having intentionally avoided registration for compulsory work, or refused to be mobilised.
- (b) Of having deserted compulsory work, or instigated others to do the same.
- (c) Of having used forged documents of identity or manufactured them in order to escape compulsory work.
- (d) Of having, as officials, made false entries for the same purpose.
- (e) Of having intentionally spoiled tools or

material. (f) Of having organised compulsory work negligently, or used it in an uneconomic way, and (g) Of being accessory to any of the above-mentioned offences.

(B) The Committees for compulsory work shall, in exceptional cases of recalcitrance and repeated offences, bring the culprits before the Revolutionary Tribunal.

(c) The same Committees shall have the right of arresting persons guilty or convicted of the above-mentioned offences in cases where they attempt to take flight ; they may punish them in minor cases by sending them to Corrective Battalions, or imprisoning them for eight days at most on the verdict of a District Committee, or for fifteen days on the verdict of a Regional Committee.

(Signed) By the President of the People's Commissaries,

N. LENIN.

All this is obviously a pretty tall order, and it is not surprising that the Russian Communist Party should have thought it necessary to pass a lengthy and reasoned resolution, which is a sort of apologia for the introduction of forced toil. As it is both interesting and important we give it in full :

COMMUNAL APOLOGIA

(1) The complete economic collapse of the country, resulting from the Imperialist war and the repeated counter-revolutionary attacks on the Soviet power,¹ showed itself at once in the inadequacy or disorganisation of such fundamental elements of production as technical material, raw materials, and, first and foremost, heating and labour power.

(2) There is no reason to hope for any immediate importation from abroad of any quantity of machinery, of coal, or of skilled workmen; the cause of this is not only the Blockade, as to which no predictions can be made at the moment, but also the extreme economic exhaustion of Western Europe.

(3) The principal lever, capable of raising our ruined national economy, is the living labour power, its organisation, distribution, and regulated application.

(a) THE INDUSTRIAL PROLETARIAT

(4) The Industrial Proletariat,² in which political power is concentrated, must from now on devote its whole attention and all its efforts to the organisation of national economy and take part directly in the process of industrial production.

(5) For this purpose the broken ranks of

¹ Not a word, it will be noticed, about nationalisation, Revolutionary Tribunals, the Extraordinary Commission, Labour Laws, or the abolition of incentive.

² Note the exclusion of the Peasantry.

skilled and trained workers must be closed by taking in again gradually their comrades now in the army, or engaged on commissariat behind the front, including the Councils of National Economy and the Communes, comrades engaged on the land, and, first and foremost, those who are occupied in commercial speculations.

(6) The release and concentration of all these skilled workers are to be realised by the combined operation of measures designed to improve their material conditions and standard of life; by measures taken by the professional alliances, which should induce these workmen to rejoin their Unions; and, finally, if necessary, by measures of administrative coercion.

(7) The essential condition for the success of all these measures, as of the whole effort to develop industry, is the collaboration and consolidation of the professional alliances, which must have at their disposal numerous assistants, responsible, devoted, and capable of putting into execution the principles of disciplined work.

(8) Simultaneously, extensive measures must be taken for the professional instruction of the young generation from their fourteenth year upwards, in order to secure the necessary supply of skilled workers. For this purpose the Commissariat of Public Instruction must create an Organ, powerful and authoritative, in which representatives of all the Institutions concerned may take part.

(b) THE UNSKILLED WORKERS

(9) The actual economic and other conditions of the present hour necessitate that the unskilled workers, i.e. the peasants, should take part, to a degree far greater than ever before, in industry and in transport.

(10) The actual conditions of the country are of such a character that industry, transport, and economic life generally cannot obtain the labour power necessary without the introduction of general compulsory work.

(c) GENERAL COMPULSORY WORK

(11) *The Socialist regime repudiates categorically the principle of "freedom of labour" proper to the Liberal Capitalistic régime; a principle which in bourgeois society represents freedom for some to exploit others, and freedom for others to be exploited. In so far as the fundamental problem of social organisation implies a struggle with physical conditions hostile to man, Socialism demands that all members of society should be compelled to take part in the production of material goods; its task is to apply in this sphere the most rational, that is to say, the most far-reaching, and for all the most attractive form of work, that of public work. Thus the principle of general compulsory work, established by the fundamental laws of the Russian Socialist Federative Republic of*

Soviets, must now be applied generally and practically.

(12) The wide and perfect introduction of the principle of compulsory work can only be realised by the perfection of the whole administrative and economic apparatus of the State, and by the universal introduction of the Work-Book, showing the exact place of each citizen, male or female, in the economic system and in the system of National Defence of the Soviet Republic.

(13) The introduction of general compulsory work must take place at once, though it may do so on lines which, though not yet definite, are capable of securing the necessary labour power for our economic life.

(14) For this purpose the numbers of workers needed at the present moment must be fixed in round figures, and at the same time the amounts of foodstuffs, machinery, etc., available for the solution of the immediate problem (1920).

(15) At the same time a special Decree must lay down the local or regional requirements which could be met by compulsory work on the part of the local population.

(16) The organisation of compulsory work, which covers both sexes, ought to have regard, where possible, to the peculiarities of different areas (local industries, times of work on the land, etc.), and the distribution of forces between general and local compulsory work should as far as possible be carried out uniformly throughout the

country so as to harm agriculture as little as possible.

(17) In the immediate future the Decree establishing compulsory general work will affect mainly those persons whose age has exempted them from mobilisation, and particularly women.

(18) The machinery for carrying out compulsory work, both general and local, should be built on a combination of local authorities, the War Commissariat, the Administrative Department of the Executive Committee, and the Department for Labour.

(19) This local organisation (Committee for Compulsory Work), which will be immediately subordinate to the Executive Committee, will receive the labour power which it needs, both from the Centre for carrying out State Works, and from the Local Executive Committee for the economic needs of its district. It will be its task to co-ordinate local demands, which must be met in the first instance, and to adjust them with those arising from the Centre.

(20) The Centre consists of the Head Committee for Compulsory Work, composed of Representatives of the Registration and Distribution Divisions of the Commissariat of Labour, of the Commissariat of the Interior, of the Mobilisation Department of the All-Russian General Staff, and the Central Statistical Department. *For the immediate future this Head Committee will be of a mixed character, since it will be an organic part of*

the Council of National Defence. All State Institutions, whether Central or Local, must carry out the arrangements and orders of this Committee in relation to questions of compulsory work.

(d) MILITARISATION OF NATIONAL
ECONOMY

(21) The transition to organised social work is inconceivable without compulsory measures applied to the backward elements in the peasant and even in the working classes, at a time when a society is itself in a period of transition and loaded with the inheritance of a disastrous past. The State's means of compulsion is military force. Therefore, the militarisation of work, to a certain extent, in this or that form, belongs to the transitional stage of a system based on a general compulsion to work.

The element of compulsion will be sparingly employed in proportion as the Socialist system develops, as the conditions of work are favourable, and as the stage of education of the growing-up generation is high.

(22) The Militarisation of National Economy, in the given conditions of Soviet Russia, is to be understood as follows: Economic questions (intensive work, careful handling of machinery and tools, conscientious use of materials, etc.) must be constantly present to the conscience of the workers and regarded by them as questions of National Defence.

The entire population, urban and rural, must recognise that mass desertion, the preference of private and personal interests, unpunctuality in work, carelessness, slackness, and neglect are questions of life and death to the whole country, and that all these failures must be ended as rapidly as possible by the use, if necessary, of the most severe means.

(23) To this end a Propaganda Campaign must be undertaken.

The leading part in this propaganda should be assigned not only to the Party, but to the professional alliances.

(24) The formal militarisation of this or that enterprise or department of industry which is specially important at the moment, or in special danger of disorganisation, will, in each case, take place by a special decision of the Defence Council; its object will be to bind the workers, for the time being, to the undertaking in question, and to introduce within it a severe regime, giving to its Executive far-reaching disciplinary powers in every case where the undertaking cannot otherwise be restored.

(25) An organisation of work of military type is necessary, especially at the beginning, for the mass employment of unskilled and unorganised workers on works of construction, on the food supply, on heating, building, timber, etc.

(26) The ideas of organised work and of the necessary discipline, coercive it may be, both internal and external, cannot be aroused

in hundreds of thousands, nay millions of people, mobilised for compulsory work, except through the co-operation of conscious, determined, and energetic workers, and above all of those who have gone through the school of war, and are used to organising masses and leading them under the most difficult conditions.

(27) In general the realisation of compulsory work involves the same problems of organisation and of principle which underlie the institution of the Soviet State itself and the creation of the Red Army, i.e. that of giving to the less conscious and more backward masses of the peasants natural leaders and organisers in the persons of the more class-conscious workers, who, to a large extent, are skilled. Inasmuch as the army represents the most important experiment as a Mass Soviet Organisation of this kind, its methods and its procedure (with all necessary modification) must be carried over into the region of compulsory work, including the use of the experience of those workers withdrawn from the army to industry.

(e) THE LABOUR ARMY

(28) The military units now released must be employed for the organisation of work in the transition to and widest extension of general compulsion.

(29) The essential conditions for the organisation of these military units and of whole armies are as follows :

- (a) The tasks imposed on the Labour Armies must be strictly limited and perfectly clear; in the first instance the accumulation of food supplies.
- (b) The relations between the Labour Armies themselves and the corresponding organisations, must be such as to avoid every disturbance of economic activities and any disorganisation of the centralised economic apparatus.
- (c) The relations between the Labour Armies and the workers in the area where such armies are acting must be based as far as possible on equality of rationing and comradeship.
- (d) A peaceful war must be carried on against the prejudices filling the bourgeois, intellectual, and trade-union classes, who might regard the militarisation of work, or the use of military units for the organisation of work, as a return to the system of Araktchiev. The Chiefs of the Labour Army must take every opportunity of demonstrating the absolute necessity of compulsory work, and of the suitability, in the march of social progress, of military coercion for the regeneration of national economy; further, they should explain that a perpetually growing *rapprochement* between the organisation of work and that of National Defence

is indispensably necessary in the development of Socialist society.

(f) THE FOOD SUPPLY

(30) The first and most important task in all economic programmes, in the mobilisation and employment of labour power, in the introduction of the Soviet system in the newly occupied regions, remains always; the concentration in the hands of the Soviet State of so many hundred million pounds of bread, meat, fish, fat, etc., that is of a food fund actually sufficient to meet the needs of the industrial proletariat, of the Soviet employees, and of the peasants mobilised for compulsory work, in the current year.

On the creation of such a fund in the vital industrial regions depends not only the realisation of the immediate economic programme, but of the whole Socialist task itself.

Russia to-day has a dualistic form of government, political and economic. The political rule is expressed in the political Soviets, each of which is in reality a federation of hamlets, villages, and towns, ruled by a political Soviet dominated by the Bolshevik Party. These Soviets have at their command all the means for coercion; and in spite of the article in the Soviet Constitution, that no State coercion will take place in the Soviet Republic, yet State coercion is the only means whereby the Soviet Republic wields power

over its citizens. In fact in the minds of prominent Bolshevnik leaders, who secured power in the name of liberty, liberty is regarded as a "bourgeois" conception, and it is held that as long as States exist, liberty is not only impossible but undesirable. It has also been pointed out that the aim of the Bolshevniks is the destruction of the State.

The now famous letter from Engels to Bebel, the well-known German Socialist, states that the proletariat needs the State, "not in the interests of liberty, but for the purpose of crushing its opponents," and, true to their master, the Russian Bolshevniks have used the State for that purpose only. All the ideas which prevail elsewhere of the liberty of the individual, the liberty of association, the freedom of the Press and freedom of thought, are non-existent, not only in the practical results of Bolshevnik administration, but also in its theoretical conception.

The second instrument of power in Bolshevnik Russia is the economic Soviets, a federation of factories, workshops, and all other institutions of economic activity. They are centralised into an organ called "The All-Russia Economic Congress," at the head of which is the Supreme Economic Council. This machinery was supposed to have been designed to achieve the second item in Bolshevnik theory—Equality. The world was told that, as a result of experiments in the economic life of the nation, Russia would achieve the Marxian ideal which is expressed

in nearly all his works, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." That this has not been secured does not require any special demonstration. Immediately after the nationalisation of workshops, factories, industries, and the land, it was observed that neither did each give according to his ability, nor could he receive according to his needs. All industrial life became dislocated; having taken away the stimulus for individual enterprise and individual effort, which after all is based on higher laws than those made by man, all the economic fabric of the country began to crumble. Production diminished until it fell to the absolute minimum, as compared with pre-war figures, of 8 to 10%. This chaos may be more completely estimated if it is realised that the standard of living in Russia had risen a hundredfold, even during the war.

The great metallurgical industry which had just entered the era of development at the beginning of this century, and which had gradually begun in some respects to supply the needs of the nation, received its first death-blow immediately after the Bolshevik *coup d'état*. Judging by its productivity, it had retrogressed comparatively speaking to its level at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The chemical industry, which received a special stimulus during the war, has ceased to exist. The leather and tanning industry, which before the war was the pride of Russian

industrialists, is almost dead. Speaking generally, one can only agree with the President of the Supreme Economic Council, M. Rykoff, who told the Economic Congress in January last that Russian industry to-day presents one huge ruin. It is argued by many, both in Russia and in this country, that this is not due to any of the Bolsheviki ideas or activities, but to the Blockade. Lenin, however, speaking on March 12th, 1920, attributed the chaos and death of industry in Russia, to the extent of at least 90%, to the system of collectivism—that is, to the rule of the Factory Committees, composed of workmen; and he therefore advocated—it has since been put into practice—the abolition of the Workers' Committees and the appointment of managers over each factory and workshop. This also necessitated the appointment of specialists and highly skilled workmen in each branch of industry, and therefore the abandonment of the Marxian principle, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," because the specialist and the highly skilled worker can only be attracted to any given industry by the higher remuneration which was at once granted by the Congress of Economic Soviets.

To-day we are faced in Russia with a new situation. The country is ruled by a group of communists, not according to communistic ideas as their prototypes in this country would have us believe, but on principles similar to those of the days of serfdom—com-

pulsory labour on the one hand and high bonuses and salaries to specialists on the other—and yet there is no improvement in the economic life of the country. There is not even hope for improvement, because the political side of the Soviet Republic is out of touch with the economic side.

A careful investigation of the internal affairs of Russia discloses the fact that the present Russian chaos is the result of three distinct periods of Russian life. First and foremost is the well-known mismanagement of the Tsaristic Governments in the days gone by, of which it is too late in the day to speak. Then we have, of course, the disastrous consequences of the war, which have affected all belligerent and even neutral countries in some respect or other. Last of all, we have the Revolutionary and Bolshevik period.

The Bolsheviks may be divided into two distinct groups. First, those whose chief aim seemingly is revenge for their suffering or grievances in the past; it is due to these that a new terror, with all its gruesome effects, mars the pages of Russian history. But it must be said that their influence is on the wane. The second group are those whose chief aim is to put into practice the ideals and dreams of communism.

Taking for their slogan the well-known communistic phrase: "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity," the Bolsheviks began to put

this triple ideal into practice in a country unprepared for the experiment, on the assumption, according to Lenin, that though the people might not know what is good for them they can still be forced to have it. In other words, Lenin and his followers of the idealistic groups of Bolsheviks considered themselves doctors, who, prescribing for the patient, had no doubts whatever as to the success of the treatment.

Seeing to-day the results of nearly three years of experiments and work, one is in a position to analyse and put the whole result into a crystallised form.

CHAPTER V

RUSSIAN FINANCE BEFORE AND AFTER THE REVOLUTION

IT is necessary to describe in some detail the state of Russia in its financial and industrial aspects before Lenin and his Socialist apostles came on the scene. The comparison between the earlier conditions and the unhappy present will be a warning of the price that must be paid for revolution and Marxian experiments. M. N. Nordman, who was Director of the Economic Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the Provisional Government in 1917, has written a book entitled *Peace Problems and Russia's Economics*. He states that at the time when the Bolshevik Revolution took place the financial position of the country was "far from hopeless," and that Russia still possessed considerable resources which properly utilised might have saved the situation.

"In this respect," writes M. Nordman, "it was a favourable symptom that during the whole time of the war and even, according

to the data to hand, in the middle of 1917, Russia had no deficit in her general Budget. During four years the Russian revenue exceeded expenditure (exclusive of military expenses) by nearly two milliard roubles. It is true that all the expenditure of the war and the Naval Ministry was charged to the war fund, but even on making that correction it will be found that the non-military Budget showed no deficit." It did not take Lenin very long to introduce bankruptcy.

Russia, of course, had obtained great advantages from her currency reform of 1897. The Central Bank of Note Issue established her public credit, and quickly attracted a stream of foreign capital. The law of 1897 prohibited the issue of bank notes by any institution except the State Bank, and provided that the amount of notes not covered by gold should not exceed the sum of 300,000,000 roubles. The first balance sheet issued after this law became operative showed a gold reserve of 1,132,000,000 roubles.

Under this wise law there can be no question that Russia was developing a financial system that was attended, by considerable and increasing economic advantages. The following figures will be of interest and will show that, before the Bolsheviks took over, Russia had a financial existence which enabled her not only to control and balance her national affairs, but also to trade with the world.

The gold fund of the State Bank was,

on an average, for the five years before the war :

	In Russia. Roubles.	Abroad. Roubles.
1909	. 1,131,100,000	166,900,000
1910	. 1,219,300,000	212,300,000
1911	. 1,262,000,000	191,800,000
1912	. 1,299,000,000	223,600,000
1913	. 1,431,800,000	178,300,000

The gold security for bank notes in the Russian State Bank, and the ratio of cash to liabilities, for the same years, was :

	Gold security Per cent.	Cash to liabilities. Per cent.
1909	. 115.2	76.7
1910	. 121.2	77.2
1911	. 114.8	68.4
1912	. 110.3	65.9
1913	. 104.5	63.4

These percentages compare with Great Britain as follows :

1909	. .	. 128.1	44.8
1910	. .	. 130.7	44.4
1911	. .	. 133.4	45.4
1912	. .	. 134.6	43.8
1913	. .	. 130.6	44.9

The State Bank credit operations, to aid commercial and industrial development, were as follows :

	Roubles.	£
1912	. 895,200,000	89,520,000
1913	. 1,051,400,000	105,140,000

In England (Bank of England) :

1912	. .	£67,000,000
1913	. .	64,000,000

The important part thus played by the State Bank would have continued had it not been for the Bolsheviks. In addition to the State Bank there were Joint Stock Commercial Banks, Mutual Credit Associations, Municipal Banks, Small Credit Institutions, and Savings Banks in operation. In these in 1913 were as follows :

	Roubles.
Joint Stock Banks	2,539,000,000
Mutual Credit Associations . .	595,000,000
Municipal Banks	198,000,000
Small Credit Institutions established as late as 1907	466,000,000
Savings Banks	1,685,000,000

The registered capital of commercial and industrial undertakings, including railways, amounted in 1910 to 3,458,000,000 roubles, showing a rapid growth of capital development.

On the issue of the first Bolshévik budget Russia's stability was seen to have vanished. This budget was for the first part of 1918, and was presented in July of that year by the Commissary of Finances. According to this budget the ordinary revenue was estimated at 2,852,000,000 roubles, the ordinary expenditure at 12,278,000,000 roubles, and the extraordinary expenditure at 5,331,000,000 roubles, giving a total expenditure of 17,602,000,000 roubles. The estimated deficit ran into 14,750,000,000 roubles. Thus, according to the Bolshevik budget, only about one-sixth of State expenditure was covered by revenue, leaving a deficit of five-sixths.

The Financial Commissary issued a memorandum with this budget and stated: "Since November 1917 there has been a great increase in expenditure unprovided for by assignment and disbursed by borrowing on account of the Treasury from the cash in hand at the State Bank, from that of postal and telegraph offices, customs houses, railway stations, etc. There is no information as to the amount of such expenditure for 1917 and it is hardly likely that any data will be obtained."

M. Nordman describes Bolshevik financial methods as follows in *Peace Problems* :

"When the local authorities considered that it was necessary to spend a certain sum they would send to one of the branch treasuries where State revenue was paid in. If, as in the case of railways, the institution which was to take the money was the same as that which had the spending of it, then the transaction was performed by private agreement. If the 'borrowing' was from a strange treasury or from the bank, a more or less armed force would be sent. And the Financial Commissary did not receive any data as to where or by whom it had been taken, or how much had been taken, or for what requirement. He was likewise ignorant of what revenue had been collected. There is positive information that, as early as December 1917, the Commissariat of Finances did not receive even one-third of the data concerning revenue.

"Is it possible to carry on any business

in ignorance of either revenue or expenditure ? Under such circumstances, is it possible even to think of carrying out any financial reforms ? There is only one answer—of course not ! And such was actually the case. *The Bolsheviks did not really establish any kind of finance.*

“ The Government Securities Printing Office turned out banknotes most energetically. The daily output on October 1st, 1916, was about 25,000,000 roubles ; on October 1st, 1917, it was about 75,000,000 roubles of the old pattern, and about 35,000,000 or 40,000,000 of the new, so-called ‘ Kerensky ’ design. In June 1918 the daily output of the Petrograd branch of the Printing Office amounted to 150,000,000–160,000,000 roubles, and besides this, first in Moscow, then in Nizhni-Novgorod, a so-called ‘ Evacuation Branch ’ was established, which could print notes of a simplified ‘ Evacuation ’ pattern, with a ‘ producing capacity ’ of up to 2,220,000,000 roubles per diem. Fortunately, this branch was not long in existence, as it was taken by the Czecho-Slav troops.

“ Partly with, and partly without, the knowledge of the People’s Financial Commissary, the banknotes got into the hands of various Soviet institutions and persons connected with the Soviet authorities, and were spent according to their discretion and intelligence, a mode of procedure which can only be characterised as *financial chaos*.”

The budget for the last half of 1918 showed

expenditure in roubles of 46,676,921,000 ; revenue 25,572,928,000 ; deficit 21,104,000,000 —nominally in British money £200,000,000. The first half of 1919 was even worse : expenditure was 50,702,617,000 ; revenue 20,349,627,000 ; and deficit, 30,553,010,000. Since then no budget has been issued ! Little wonder, then, that things have come to such a pass that a thousand roubles of Lenin's coinage are only worth $2\frac{1}{2}$ roubles in gold. Even the State Bank has now been dissolved under decree of the Russian Soviet Government. Of course, side by side with chaotic maladministration there is a tremendous leakage.

The Bolsheviks ordered a confiscation of capital on a grand scale, and no doubt Bolshevik officials laid violent hands on moneys and securities wherever they could be found. Although it had been estimated that 10,000 million roubles would be brought into the Treasury from this source, the yield that was placed at the disposal of the Government was only 987,000,000.

The Russian trade negotiations between Mr. Lloyd George and M. Krassin have at last brought to a point the most aggravating and difficult question of Russia's foreign debts. According to the extreme Labour press in this country, this question is supposed to have been pressed upon Mr. Lloyd George by the so-called Bond-holders. It is nevertheless of interest to analyse Russia's foreign debts and thus see what this delicate question really

amounts to. The total of Russia's indebtedness to foreign countries is estimated at normal exchange value at £1,600,000,000 sterling, of which the war indebtedness alone amounts to £1,150,000,000 sterling. The latter sum is due to the Governments and not to any city financiers. Of this sum England alone has contributed £568,000,000 sterling—a sum equal to more than one-third of the whole of the Dominions and Allies' indebtedness to Great Britain.

It would be interesting to note here that a similar amount is also due to Great Britain from France, whilst the latter is creditor to nearly a similar amount to Russia. Great Britain raised this money, which was lent to Russia, through taxation, savings, and borrowing abroad.

Thus far we have not dealt with the "City" or the Bond-holders, and are prepared to assume that these may be left alone as a class by themselves, although it must be emphasised that the bulk of these Bond-holders are small investors. Russian Bonds on the London market, and generally on all the financial markets of Western Europe, attracted the widow, the trustee, the small shop-keeper, and the workman with savings, owing to their very high rate of interest, and almost gilt-edged security. Assuming, however, that these investors are to suffer for their speculation by the repudiation of Russia's debts by the Bolsheviki, there remains only that part of the debt which is owing to the Government as such.

Taking the average interest on the sum now due of £568,000,000 at 5%, the lowest possible rate, the repudiation, if allowed to stand, will cost this country for yearly interest the sum of £28,400,000; that is, 16s. 3d. per capita of the population, or £2 8s. 9d. per adult worker; whereas the original capital works out at £12 12s. 5½d. per capita of the population, or £37 17s. 4d. per adult worker.

Assuming, again, that the Labour press is correct in its contention that all the taxes raised are ultimately paid by the workers, their recent effort to convince the British worker that Russia's repudiation of her debts is a blow only to the capitalist class cannot be reconciled with the above facts. No matter what party is in power, it cannot fairly repudiate the War Savings Certificates—even the Bolsheviks in Russia could not do that—and therefore British workers will have to pay a higher taxation for the amount due by their Russian comrades who have repudiated it. Mr. Lloyd George's request to M. Krassin to give some assurances with reference to this debt is of course very essential. The country's taxation to-day, in view of her enormous national debt, is one of the important items to which consideration must be given. An assurance from Russia that the repudiation of the debt is not to stand, but that efforts will be made to repay it, would relieve the heavy burden now laid on every Briton's shoulders, and at the same time make it easier for the trade negotiations to proceed.

CHAPTER VI

RUSSIAN INDUSTRY

IT has long been known that the Russian Empire is a land of vast mineral wealth with prospects of prosperity second to none of those offered by any other country in the world. Quite apart from this, however, on the agricultural side Russia not only had a most promising future, but enjoyed, up to the year 1914, a very satisfying past. It is our purpose in this chapter to show how Russia stood industrially and agriculturally before her troubles swept in upon her.

In the period 1911 to 1913 the area for cereals under cultivation was 92,500,000 dessiatinas—a dessiatina equals 2·7 acres. Wheat amounted to 29·8% of the total, rye to 30·2%. Naturally enough, the milling industry developed rapidly, with the result that as far back as 1912 the total milling freight carried on the railways amounted to more than 338,000,000 poods—a pood equals 36·11 lb. This milling industry not only supplied the home demand, but in the same year provided exports of more than 12,000,000 poods.

In respect of cattle, in the year 1913 Russia held upwards of 43,000,000 heads of horned

cattle. Again, sheep breeding was, up to the same year, a prosperous and rapidly increasing industry. There were upwards of 86,000,000 coarse-wool sheep and more than 4,000,000 fine-wool sheep. In addition, there were more than 13,000,000 head of swine. By 1912 Russia was producing more cattle than supplied her needs and was exporting to Europe. In 1912, for instance, she exported to Great Britain £390,000 worth of carcasses, chiefly bacon, and this figure in the following year increased to £510,000. When we come to horses, we find Russia in the foremost position. She possessed 37,500,000 horses, as against 23,750,000 in the United States and only 2,000,000 in Great Britain. Russia was practically the sole purveyor of horses to the European markets. In 1911 she sent 27,000 to England and 68,000 to Germany. As regards poultry, she developed a great industry. Central Russia took the lead in this trade, 60,000,000 roubles worth of poultry being produced annually, of which a third was exported. The exports had risen in 1913 to 45% of the total production. In 1913, England took from Russia more than 15,000,000,000 eggs, and out of a total of dead poultry export, amounting to over 9,000,000 poods, Great Britain took half. When we come to fodder grass, we find that 2,000,000 dessiatinas of land were under production, 54% belonging to landlords and the balance to peasantry. So prosperous was this industry that, in 1913, 3,500,000 poods of grass seeds

were exported. Russia, of course, was a considerable producer of cotton, nearly 500,000 dessiatinas being under cultivation. The yield in Trans-Caucasia for 1912-13 was over 15,000,000 poods.

In regard to flax we find Russia in a very strong position. She was the principal supplier of the factories of Western Europe and America. In the year 1912 the area under cultivation was nearly 1,500,000 dessiatinas, the seed crop amounted to nearly 38,000,000 poods, and the fibre crop to more than 45,500,000 poods. In 1912 her exports of linseed were upwards of 10,000,000 poods, of flax fibre over 19,000,000, and of tow and codilla over 2,000,000. Her own manufacture of this commodity was not small. She had 230 mills with over 410,000 spindles and 15,000 automatic looms employing upwards of 85,000 workers. There were signs, however, of greater activity ahead.

Hemp was another of Russia's prosperous industries. In 1912 the area under cultivation was more than 600,000 dessiatinas, the seed crop exceeded 25,000,000 poods, and the fibre crop 24,000,000. Exports of seed equalled over 700,000 poods, of fibre over 3,000,000 poods, and of hemp tow over 750,000 poods. The manufacture of hemp yarn was a considerable industry amongst the peasants whose average yearly production equalled 5,000,000 poods. When we come to beet, we find evidence of similar activity and prosperity. The area cultivated in 1912-13 was

more than 600,000 dessiatinas. For the same period the sugar production from the beet was over 75,000,000 poods. The extent to which this industry was growing is proved by the fact that in 1913-14 there was a surplus from the preceding year of nearly 22,000,000 poods; in that year the home market consumed over 84,000,000 poods, over 8,500,000 poods were exported, and the stock in hand was in excess of 22,000,000 poods. There can be no more crushing condemnation of the disastrous effects of revolution than the fact that in Russia to-day there is practically no sugar at all.

Tobacco was another great and growing industry. There were over 300,000 plantations, covering an area of more than 650,000 dessiatinas, with a crop of over 7,000,000 poods. The export of tobacco in 1911 was 636,000 poods.

Fruit production in Russia was on so vast a scale that great quantities remained unconsumed every year.

The production of hops was not quite equal to Russian needs, and the vine cultivation was comparatively small, so far as export went. Russia had 230,000 dessiatinas under cultivation, and she imported £1,000,000 worth of wine from Europe. When, however, we come to forestry, we find in 1912 an enormous area of timber, more than 84,000,000 dessiatinas in European Russia and nearly 92,000,000 in Asiatic Russia. The sales of the sawmills and factories engaged in wood work amounted

in 1912 to upwards of 174,000,000 roubles. The export of timber was 428,000,000 poods, and the export of green wood was of the value of more than 42,500,000 roubles.

These facts will give the reader a fair impression of the Russia that was in being before Revolution and the Bolsheviks descended upon her.

A terrible transformation then took place. If we ourselves described the Russia of to-day, we might be open to question, but it is not necessary to run any such risk. There is an official description contained in the amazing report of M. Rykoff, submitted by him to the Congress of National Economic Councils held in Moscow, January 22nd-25th, 1920. We set out the whole of this important document:—

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION OF SOVIET RUSSIA

“ During the years of imperial and civil war the economic exhaustion of European countries, and especially of Russia, reached an unforeseen magnitude. The civil war was still more disastrous. It raged over the greater part of Soviet Russia. It brought with it not merely a collision of military forces, but destruction, arson, explosion, and dissipation of the gigantic treasures and stores of the Republic. In Southern Russia there is hardly a railway siding or railway bridge that has not been blown up. In the Urals, Kolt-

chak took away, machine parts, drawings, plans of factories, and carried off with him 90% of the skilled workers. On the occasion of the attacks of Mamantoff and other White Guards an enormous number of factories and a great quantity of goods were destroyed.

TRANSPORT

“Formerly in the worst times the number of locomotives not in working order did not exceed 15%. To-day, out of every 100 locomotives Soviet Russia possesses, 60 are ‘sick,’ and only 40 in running order. The number of locomotives repaired before the war amounted to 8%. After the October Revolution it sank to 1%. To-day the improvement only amounts to a further 1%. The number of locomotives again put into running order amounts to 2%. In the present condition of transport, locomotive repairs are so frequently necessary that the repair shops cannot keep pace. The number of locomotives is decreasing at the rate of 200 per month. We must increase our repairs from 2% to 10% in order to prevent further dislocation of transport, and to maintain the present position.

“Six hundred thousand poods of cotton must be transported monthly from Turkestan to the Moscow textile works. At present only two trains are at our disposal per month. That means that under the present conditions it will require decades to transport

the 8,000,000 poods of cotton stored up in Turkestan.

“A new metallurgical area—the Urals—has fallen into our possession, but hitherto only one express goods train per month has been available to bring the Ural minerals to Central Russia. The transport of 10,000,000 poods of metal with one goods train per month would also require decades, even if we utilised only an insignificant portion of the metal stores existing in the Ural.

“*The workers of industrial towns are starving and do not even receive the trifling bread ration laid down as the normal for workers by the Commissariat of Food Supplies.* Yet huge quantities of foodstuffs are stored up at the railway stations. The stores are so huge that the granaries are not sufficient ; nevertheless, they cannot be put at the disposal of the hungry workers and peasants of Soviet Russia from lack of locomotives and railway waggons.

“The transport problem must be solved at all costs. The productivity of the separate railway departments and the initiative of the workers throughout Russia must be raised to the highest degree. The Council of People's Commissars has decided to call up individual workers and working parties for the repair of rolling stock. The locomotives and waggons repaired by them will be utilised for the supply of provisions to the factories and workshops engaged on repairs. Recently this decision has been extended to fuel. Every factory is now able to command fuel, provided it

undertakes to repair locomotives and waggons under the direction of the Commissariat for Traffic.

“ Every machine shop and metal works must be prepared to say how many locomotives and waggons it is in a position to repair during spare time and on Sundays.

RAW MATERIALS

“ According to approximate and inadequate accounts, the amount of flax under cultivation has decreased by 30 per cent. Formerly Russia produced over 20,000,000 poods of flax. In 1918 we succeeded in harvesting about 5,000,000 poods of flax, but the produce of 1919 and 1920 is far below the figure. In 1918 we produced 4,350,000 poods in all. We hoped for a good cotton harvest, but in December and January a heavy decrease in the harvest was already apparent. This is due to a series of causes, but chiefly because the production of corn and breadstuffs is eliminating flax. Flax was principally cultivated by the peasants of the northern provinces, whom we have latterly been unable to supply with sufficient foodstuffs. Therefore the peasants grow grain in place of flax, because the prices offered by speculators for grain are higher than the maximum prices offered by the State for flax.

TO LIFT THE BLOCKADE WILL NOT END
THE CRISIS

“The assumption that the lifting of the blockade and the conclusion of peace will alleviate the crisis in raw material is the greatest of errors. On the contrary, the lifting of the blockade and the conclusion of peace, if ever this should occur, will increase the demand for raw materials, for they are the sole products Russia can exchange with Europe.

“The present stocks of flax will last us eleven months, perhaps a year. We have no great quantities for export. The same is true of the leather and wool industries. There has been a reduction in the number of cattle farms, especially of wool-bearing beasts.

“The number of peasants has decreased since the October revolution, and the number of large cattle-rearing farms has also decreased. A process of levelling up has taken place. The wealthy peasant has decreased in numbers, which practically leads to a decrease of cattle-rearing throughout Russia and means a decrease in the supply of leather and wool.

“In the first half-year of 1919 about 1,000,000 hides were procured. The number of hides placed at the disposal of the Government decreases each month. Measures must be taken to combat cattle mortality and encourage the breeding of cattle throughout Soviet Russia.

“Russia has always been dependent on

foreign countries for leather. Before the war half the heavy leathers were imported from abroad, chiefly from America.

FUEL

“This question has called forth prolonged debates in the Assembly. The population of Moscow suffers most from the shortage in fuel. The situation has improved. We produced 5,000,000 cords of wood fuel by January 1st, 1920, i.e. half the amount laid down by the Council of People’s Commissars for the season, namely 12,000,000 to 14,000,000 cords. As regards transport, in November and December 1,400,000 cords were delivered by rail, and 1,000,000 cords by water—2,400,000 cords in all. It will be observed that transport does not keep pace with supply, and that, out of 6,000,000 cords, only 2,500,000 cords, i.e. about one-third, could be delivered. The main problem is that of hauling from the forests and delivery. We have not hitherto been successful in this field, for out of the normal 400,000 waggons laid down for Moscow we have had barely 300 waggons daily at our disposal. While the supply of wood fuel has improved, the supply of mineral fuel, especially oil fuel, is as bad as ever.

“The most important coal area, the Donetz basin, has just fallen into our hands. I am not yet in a position to give exact figures of the supplies. I have only reports that there are 100,000,000 poods on the surface. But as

long as the bridges and railways in the Donetz basin remain unrepaired, the supplies of coal there will not be available.

“The coal area of Moscow, which lies within our reach, has not provided us with the amount it should for the supply of Soviet Russia with fuel, and the production of the previous year was no greater than that of the year before ; it barely amounted to 30,000,000 poods.

“Under the Tsar’s regime, the Tsarist officials managed during the imperialist war, by force and compulsion, in the interests of a handful of nobles and capitalists, and with the help of prisoners of war, to bring the coal production of the Moscow mine area up to 40,000,000 poods and over. The workers and peasants must be just as energetic and extract not merely 40,000,000, but 60,000,000 and 80,000,000 poods. The Government of Workers and Peasants, with the help of labour discipline, and also, if necessary, with the help of State compulsion, must restore the coal area of Moscow in the interests of all the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia. We have laid down 60,000,000 poods as the figure for next year.

FOOD SUPPLY

“Whenever we speak in the factories and workshops of increased productivity, increased wages, etc., we invariably receive the same reply : ‘*Give us more bread, and we shall be able to work more.*’ The food supplies last year greatly exceeded those of the year before. On

January 1st, 1920, the Commissariat for Food procured 90,000,000 poods of grain, in comparison with 60,000,000 poods in the previous year. In this year, too, the peasants delivered half the amount they were called upon to deliver. There are sufficient supplies of grain in the granaries of the Soviet Republic to satisfy the requirements of the workers and peasants on the established scale for three months, including April. If the peasants and workers have not hitherto received their grain in most consuming districts, the fault was not due to insufficient supply, but to the impossibility of delivering the grain stored up in the granaries. The problem of food supply to-day is above all a problem of transport.

“ It is, of course, no great boast that the food supplies of one of the largest grain-producing countries in the world are ensured up to the month of April. In place of the 90,000,000 poods, we must produce many hundred million, the bread cards must be abolished, and every worker and peasant must get as much bread as he desires. Last year we made appreciable progress in the supply of bread.

“ When in the factory meetings it is claimed that the economic front can only be broken by means of food, it must be declared that the economic front can only be broken by work, for whatever aspect of the economic situation of Soviet Russia we regard, we always come up against the question of the productivity of labour. That only means that in the Republic of Workers and Peasants the economic

situation lies entirely in the hands of the workers and peasants. They have no real lack of food and fuel: they must put locomotives in working order to bring the food and fuel to the factories and workshops. For fodder, 4,500,000 poods of oats are at present supplied. The deliveries, however, comprise only 25 % of our requirements.

INDUSTRY

“In the first year succeeding the October Revolution there were supporters and opponents of nationalisation, supporters and opponents of trusts, supporters and opponents of the centralisation of industry. Further discussion is unnecessary. In my report of last year I placed the number of nationalised industries at about 1,125. This year we possess about 4,000 nationalised industries. Practically the whole of industry has passed into the hands of the State and the Soviet organs, and private industrialists and manufacturers have been abolished. There are about 10,000 factories which include the home industries. The latter are not subject to nationalisation, and the 4,000 nationalised factories include, not only the large industries, but also a considerable number of the medium-sized industries of Soviet Russia.

“Of these industries, about 2,000 are at present working. All others are at a standstill. About 1,000,000 persons are in employment. Industry is passing through a crisis in so far

as the number of people employed are concerned. The causes are those above mentioned, the shortage in raw material, fuel, and means of transport.

“Even in the industries which supply the armies we are continually up against a scarcity of skilled workers. For weeks and for months we could not find a sufficient number of skilled and educated workers to supply the factories engaged in furnishing the Red Army with rifles, machine-guns, and cannon, for the protection of Moscow and to destroy the White Guards. We were held up by the lack of twenty to thirty skilled workers. The disappearance of the most precious item in production—labour—has reached alarming proportions. Many factories possessing supplies of fuel and raw material cannot be kept running, from want of skilled workmen.

“The above causes make it impossible to utilise the machines at the disposal of the Soviet Power. The nationalised industries are the largest, and of these about 700 are idle. Forty-one per cent. of the industries, including the small industries which employ 76% of the working class, are nationalised. That means that these 41% of nationalised industries embrace three-quarters of the total national production. Only 57% of the industries are nevertheless working; 43% are idle.

“As to the organisation of the nationalised industries, a larger proportion of them are joined up into trusts, and are controlled by a

corresponding central administration. Forty per cent. of the industries are linked together in this way.

THE METAL-SMELTING INDUSTRY

“The total number of existing foundries is 1,191. Of these, 614 are nationalised and about 160 linked together. Last year 40,000,000 poods of metal were delivered, which comprised about 30% of the national need. Of this 30%, only 15% was, however, used. For January 1920 we can command throughout Soviet Russia, including the Urals, 25,000,000 poods of iron and steel, about 5,000,000 poods of other metals, and about 3,000,000 poods of other articles. This comprises about a quarter of what is absolutely essential for the maintenance of our industries. And this is only possible because the Ural industries have fallen into our possession and form a substantial basis for the national metal supply. Until the reconquest of the Urals, every smelting furnace throughout Soviet Russia was out of gear; not a pood of metal was being produced; and we were living entirely on such supplies as we found in the depots, factories, and workshops. The Ural is not yet entirely at work. Koltchak had carried off 90% of the technicians and an enormous number of skilled workmen. In addition, a large number of works were damaged.

“According to the latest reports a large proportion of the requirements Koltchak carried

away from the Urals have been found in Tomsk. They are now being brought back, and we shall shortly be able to restart a large number of the Ural industries.

“Of the 97 smelting furnaces in the Urals, 14 are at work. They can smelt 1,000,000 poods of iron ore, i.e. not 20% of normal peace-time production. Of the 90 Martin ovens, 16 are working, producing 1,320,000 poods, about 25% of the peace-time figure. Of the 14 puddling ovens, 6 are working. One hundred thousand workers in all are not employed in the Urals; that is, one-half the normal figure. If the decrease in the working day is taken into consideration, we get 40% of the pre-war production.

METAL-EMPLOYING INDUSTRIES

“The locomotive works delivered in 1919 40% (50% at most) of the deliveries for 1913. Repaired locomotives are also included here, although the repair factories were only instituted the year before.

“The construction of waggons has sunk to 19%, the manufacture of spare parts to 30%. The production of agricultural machinery is 30% to 40%, as compared with 1913. Exceptions are scythes 123%, and sickles 84%. The production of ploughs, harrows, threshing machines, etc., varies between 40% to 20%; ploughs 43%; harrows 26%; and harvesting machines 36%.

“The machine industry presents the same picture, 30% as compared with 1913, i.e.

357,000 poods as compared with 1,000,000 poods.

“Russia is living at one-third of the pre-war scale. For one or two years we might subsist on old stocks, but the stocks are coming to an end. We are daily approaching the time when these fields of industry will come to a standstill. The economic problem must be boldly envisaged, not a moment must be wasted, every effort must be exerted to ameliorate the economic life of the country.

THE TEXTILE INDUSTRIES

“In the textile industry, which has been wholly nationalised, production in 1919 was 10% of the normal.

“Of a total of about 7,000,000 spindles, only 7% were being utilised ; of 164,000 machines, only 11% were running. The deliveries of cotton have been practically nil. We had at our disposal in 1919 only $4\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the amount of cotton normally required by our textile industry. In 1918 we still had 15% ; last year Turkestan was conquered, but its cotton could not be transported, and we could not even obtain 5% of the raw material required.

“At present we have 467,000 poods of yarn at our disposal ; last year we had 723,000 poods. The stores of half-manufactured products have also decreased. The monthly production varied as follows : January, February, and March, 200,000 poods of fabric ; September, October, and November, 25,000 to 68,000. The whole industry of the central provinces,

which takes the third place behind England and Germany, and competes closely with the latter, was almost completely at a standstill.

“The woollen industry is somewhat better. The number of factories at work amounts to sixty-four; the number of spindles only amounts to 25%. Last year 14,500,000 arshin¹ were produced. The woollen industry has stocks of raw material for another half-year, and the maintenance of the factories is chiefly a problem of the supply of foodstuffs and labour.

EXCEPTIONS

“Certain exceptions stand out. The linen factories of Kostroma equalled the output of 1914. The same is true of certain woollen manufactures, and certain metal works, which exceed the output of the previous year. But these are of secondary importance, and do not materially affect the economic situation.

“The blockade has compelled us, in order to avoid a complete standstill in the paper, textile, and other industries, to produce articles which were always imported from abroad. In this we have been very successful.

“We have launched out into new fields in the textile, leather, and other industries. We are now producing cloth and sewing thread. Since we possess neither American nor Egyptian cotton, we use a mixture of flax and Turkestan cotton. We have recently begun the construction of large-scale electric power stations. We

¹ Arshin = about 2 yards.

built the largest power stations. We built the largest electric power centres in Soviet Russia at Kaschira and on the peat moors of Shatursk, capable of generating 40,000 k.w.

“But these high-lights do not relieve the general gloom; they only show that with great exertions we can perform miracles in our Soviet Russia.

“With great expenditure of effort we managed to provide the Red Army with a gigantic number of cloaks, and the number of these cloaks has increased from year to year. When, on the occasion of Mamantoff's attack, a portion of the equipment of the army was destroyed, we succeeded, with a tremendous effort, in making the loss good, and provided the army with 3,000,000 cloaks, although many of them were not quite new.

“These isolated facts and incidents taken from our economic life go to show how, by intense effort, miracles may be performed in Soviet Russia. These miracles must become general. The whole population must take part in the work of restoring our economic life and our economic resources. Strict discipline must be observed; the workers must prove themselves as courageous in labour as in the defence of Moscow and Petrograd. Idlers and egoists must be treated as severely as White Guards.

“Whether we succeed depends on ourselves, for now we have sources of fuel and raw material, and tremendous reserves of labour, at our disposal.”

Further valuable facts with regard to the paralysis of Russian industries under Bolshevism are supplied by M. Nordman in his book, *Peace Problems*.¹ We quote from page 115 :

“ How abruptly Russian production was reduced in districts in the power of the Bolsheviks may best be seen from the data concerning the number of unemployed.

“ In Petrograd, Moscow, Yaroslav, Nizhni-Novgorod, Samara, and other provinces, there is ample information concerning businesses which have been closed, either temporarily or finally. According to the information obtained by the Congress of Delegates of Metalworkers' Unions in the Moscow district, already, towards the end of 1917, 111 firms with 108,000 hands had to be closed down. By December 15th, 1917, there were 36 textile factories closed, and 136,000 hands thrown out of employment, and 224 machine workshops with 120,000 workmen shared the same fate. Some idea of the state of affairs in the works of this region may be formed from the fact that the Central Committee of the Union of Metalworkers was obliged to request the workmen of the Union to abstain from the seizure of works by operatives, as this led to the cessation of work.

“ The Bolshevik authorities could not deny this colossal growth of the number of the unemployed. At the meeting of the Union

¹ Published in 1919 by Putney Press, Ltd.

of Labour Commissars, Smiarnikoff announced officially that there were over 500,000 unemployed, the greater part of whom were in Petrograd and Moscow.

PETROGRAD INQUIRY INTO UNEMPLOYMENT

“The most accurate figures are those relating to the position of workmen in the Petrograd district. In 1918 there was a special inquiry made in regard to this, by means of inquiry forms sent out, and data were thus obtained in each branch of industry on January 1st, 1917, and April 1st, 1918. They were as follows :

Denomination of Workmen of the Petrograd District

—	January 1st, 1917.	April 1st, 1918.	Discharged in 1918.
Textile industry . . .	30,301	26,066	1,250
Textile manufacturing industry . . .	8,055	4,924	2,044
Paper-making industry . .	10,056	11,609	1,062
	* 7,951	6,191	1,243
Wood-working industry . .	4,187	2,196	1,528
Metal-working industry . .	149,740	34,518	82,057
	* 2,089	1,352	1,328
Animal products manu- facturing	11,168	7,682	1,638
Foodstuffs	14,618	10,721	840
Chemicals	5,194	2,350	2,090
Electro-technical industries	11,622	6,276	6,593
Metallurgic industry . . .	357	24	364
Production	22,548	6,586	15,026
Total	277,986	120,495	117,063
Reduction 57%.			

* Subsidiary Trades.

“ This table clearly shows the complete disorganisation of industry in Petrograd industry. Of the 277,000 workmen engaged in industry in 1917, by January 1st, 1918, only 120,000 remained—that is, considerably less than half ; of 157,000 operatives discharged, 46,000 were dismissed in 1917, and 117,000 during the first three months of 1918—that is to say, during the Bolshevik regime. These figures speak for themselves.

DECLINE IN PRODUCTIVENESS

“ How great was the decline in the productiveness of labour may best be seen from the following extract from an article in the *Novaia Zhizn*, a newspaper of extreme views, which supported the Bolsheviks up to the very November Revolution.

“ The present Petrograd proletarians are living on society. Their “labour” is a mere wanton destruction of precious raw materials, a senseless waste of fuel. The wages paid to the workmen and other employees of industrial undertakings in Petrograd are not remuneration for productive labour, but a hidden form of social charity, as in the famous *ateliers nationaux* of “ Louis Blanc.” ’ (*Novaia Zhizn*. Quoted by the *Den* newspaper, for December 28th, 1917.)”

M. Nordman, who has enjoyed opportunities of arriving at the facts, gives us in simple words the cause of this debacle. He tells that :

“The Bolshevik decrees concerning the nationalisation of industrial and commercial undertakings were greatly conducive to the ruin of commerce and industry.

SOVIETS OF EMPLOYEES

“According to these decrees the former owners of the businesses were deprived of their rights, and their undertaking became the property of the State. However, the Bolshevik authorities were unable to carry this out in practice, and to undertake the actual management of the concerns thus nationalised.

“As a result, the actual management of the firms where there were no operatives was given into the hands of a committee of employees. These committees were elected by a meeting of employees by a majority of votes, and the late administrative staff, if not discharged, was obliged to work under the strict supervision of the Committee.

“As a matter of course, this new organisation prevented the work being carried on anything like rationally. Even under normal conditions, this would have had an exceedingly bad effect on the financial results. But under the circumstances existing in Russia—that is, when the undertaking lacks sufficient working capital, raw material, fuel, when all commercial relations are in disorder, the new organisation must inevitably lead to the closing of the undertaking. The Committee

of Employees, composed of chance members, usually knew very little about such a complicated matter as the management of a commercial or industrial business. They had neither sufficient information as to where, what, and how to purchase, nor a proper connection, nor personal credit to overcome difficulties. Therefore it is not surprising that in many firms, where the employees were on good terms with the Board, and understood that the new organisation could create nothing new, the Committee of Employees had to be organised by *coercion* or else it existed only nominally, leaving the real management of the business to the old Board. This, of course, was very displeasing to the Bolshevik authorities, as it plainly showed the failure of their policy. It was the same with many industrial undertakings.

“In some factories the more intelligent operatives reinstated the old Boards, having convinced themselves of the total impossibility of carrying on the business by themselves. This gave rise to constant misunderstandings between the workmen and the Bolshevik authorities, who did not stop at anything to eradicate this opposition to their theories. In one case—this happened at a very large factory in Moscow—the workmen to the number of several thousand demanded the liberation of the owner of the factory, who had been arrested by the Bolsheviks. To this the Bolsheviks replied that should there be any further protests or

strikes in connection with this matter, armed force would be employed, and the factory would be destroyed.

LOOTING OF UNDERTAKINGS

“It was worse in the case of enterprises where the mass of workmen were less intelligent. The decree depriving the owners of the right of property in the business was understood to involve its transference to the workmen. In such cases, while the factory was working, some sort of order was still observed. But, if it stopped for any reason, such as want of means, fuel, etc., a real looting of the plant began, so that the whole business was destroyed. Of course, this was very profitable for the Germans, as it was the best means of ruining Russian industry, and thus freeing the market for German goods. And there is no doubt that German agitators must have played some part in all this.”

It is reported on the authority of Krassin that Soviet Russia has 15,000,000 tons of grain available for export. Mr. Lloyd George once spoke of “bursting corn-bins.” A careful analysis of these figures indicates either ignorance on the part of M. Krassin or an effort at deliberate falsehood.

Looking at it from a purely economic standpoint, and comparing it with the normal past of pre-war years, i.e. five years free of bad harvests, we find that the total yearly crop of

grain amounted to about 80,000,000 tons for the whole Empire.

Out of this total the exports amounted to only 7,000,000 tons, and even that comparatively small quantity was already higher than was economically sound.

Taking away the crops of territories which have since separated from Russia, in addition to the great devastation of war and revolution, we are entitled to agree with the Bolshevik Commissary for Food, that the crops of Soviet Russia beginning with that of 1917 were approximately one-seventh of the pre-war total, i.e. about 11,000,000 tons.

Lenin, quoting figures supplied to him by the Central Statistical Department, shows that in the twenty-six chief Provinces of Soviet Russia, and with a population of 52,700,000, divided into 9,900,000 in towns and 42,400,000 in villages, the total production of cereals amounted to 739,400,000 poods. This total is also divided into 625,400,000 poods produced by Producing Provinces, and 114,000,000 poods by the Consuming Provinces.

The average consumption per person of the population as above is 13·6 poods of grain per year, of which the town population receives 8·15 poods per year, i.e. about 300 lb., or four-fifths of a lb. per day.

If such is the available ration of the population, the "bursting corn-bins" are, to say the least, mythical.

CHAPTER VII

THE ARMED PROLETARIAT

BRITISH Labour leaders are reduced to a condition of grave embarrassment over their support of Lenin. In the first place they owe their very public existence to the support of Trade Unions. Already there is an uneasy feeling amongst British Trade Unionists that all is not well with their Russian comrades. It was probably with the view of removing these apprehensions that Mr. George Lansbury announced in his remarkable work *What I saw in Russia*, that "The trade-union movement has not been abolished in Russia and is not likely to be." The actual facts are in sharp variance with Mr. Lansbury's kindly optimism.

The Russian Trade-Union movement was in its infancy as recently as 1918. Though legal since 1905, it was an underground political movement; its achievements, political and economic, were, to say the least, insignificant. The March Revolution in 1917 brought the Trade Unions into their proper sphere and their development began. Between April and August 1917, 4,000,000 new members were enrolled into the movement. This large

THE ARMED PROLETARIAT 301

Speaking on June 24th, 1918, at the Sorokulovo Works, Lenin began with a violent attack upon his avowed opponents, the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries, for their glorification of personal freedom.

"Freedom"—according to Lenin—"is a bourgeois notion. . . . Russia must get rid of the notion that happiness is to be attained by personal freedom. An even Government composed of a few understanding men [stares ears] . . . is what Russia wants, and what, happily, Russia has." "Crumbling is as bad as treason and will be as sharply punished."

With regard to the problem of Trade Unions, Lenin announced that "their establishment as independent organizations has come to an end."

The unions are to be transferred into State Departments, and each union will be linked to a branch of the Supreme Executive Council, and will be put under the supervision of a committee of one official (Government) and two reliable communists drawn among the workers.

Not an elected committee of workers, who are members of the union, and responsible to their fellows, but an official and reliable committee to do Lenin's bidding.

There are, according to Bukharin, figures, only 20,000 Communists, while there are no fewer than 24,000,000 Trade Unionists of the new order. The 20 Trade Unions of Russia are to be controlled by 20 official and 200 unofficial Bukharins.

It is now, of course, obvious that "freedom is a bourgeois notion" and that grumbling is a crime.

Yet this is the regime that British Trade Unionists are upholding for Russia. Would they remain in office a single week if they proposed exactly the same thing for the British comrades at home?

Mr. Lansbury's difficulties become even more acute when he is confronted with the Revolution. "I myself am a pacifist and would not lift a finger to hurt a human being, capitalist or other." So spoke Mr. Lansbury at the Scarborough Labour Conference on June 25th, 1920. This is delightful. How comes it, then, that this gentle pacifist is the stalwart supporter of Lenin, who is not a pacifist at all? Lenin certainly has been lifting all his fingers and has hurt countless human beings. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to say that Lenin and his Red Guards have plunged the Russian Empire into blood. Even Lenin has lost patience with Mr. Lansbury, and pleasantly discards him as an "Hypnotical Ideologist." Lenin was probably delighted with this phrase, and we trust that Mr. Lansbury does not squirm under it. Of course a man is either a revolutionary or he is against revolutions. If he honestly objects to hurt people he should not shake hands with Lenin. Whatever fanciful rose-water ideas Mr. Lansbury may have formed of revolutions as they ought to be, he should at least have acquired sufficient knowledge of

the terrible fate that has befallen Russia, to know what revolutions actually are. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, have no such illusions. With them it is common ground that revolutions mean bloodshed, upheaval and chaos, and they like them none the less for that. Marx, with characteristic incisiveness, wrote that "force (revolutionary) is the instrument and the means by which social movements hack their way through and break up the dead and fossilised political forms." In their joint manifesto, Marx and Engels proclaimed that class antagonism "is transformed into open revolution, and the proletariat establishes its rule, by means of the violent overthrow of the capitalist class." Mr. Lansbury's friend Lenin is as full-blooded and as violent a revolutionary as ever lived. Has he not told us that "the necessity of systematically fostering among the masses this and only this point of view about violent revolution lies at the root of the whole of Marx's and Engels's teaching, and it is just the neglect of such propaganda and agitation . . . that brings their betrayal of it into prominent relief" ?

And again : "The substitute of a proletarian for the capitalist State is impossible without a revolution." What else, we would ask, is Mr. Lansbury striving for but this self-same substitution in Great Britain. If he quite honestly announced that capitalism could only be dethroned by means of a violent revolution, quite a large number of his socialist supporters

would withdraw themselves from his leadership. The British people would be far wiser to accept Lenin's statements in preference to Lansbury's. They will then realise all that a revolution means with its horrors and bloodshed and its subsequent disaster and chaos. Lenin has had his violent revolution, so that the proletariat can dethrone the capitalists. The capitalists have gone, but have the proletariat come into their kingdom? Nothing of the kind. The proletariat is even more oppressed than it was under the old order, and Lenin and a handful of dictators rule the land. Lenin's attitude on this matter is interesting and ingenious. "The monstrous oppression of the labouring masses," he wrote in his preface to *The State and Revolution*, "by the State, which is identifying itself more and more intimately with the all-powerful combines, is becoming ever more terrible." With the same breath he even goes farther and cries, "The foremost countries are being converted into military prisons for workers." It will be remembered that members of the recent British delegation to Russia complained that Lenin was incredibly misinformed on the subject of labour in other countries. We can assure Mr. Lenin that Britain is not being converted into "military prisons for workers," but we must point out to the greatest autocrat that has ever been the curse of the Russian people, that this, and nothing less than this, is what he himself has inflicted on his own country.

Lenin's point is that the State is only the instrument through which capitalist combines enslave the working-classes, and that they can only become emancipated by the overthrow of the State by means of a violent revolution. Engels, the co-worker of Marx, who is so frequently quoted by Lenin and his fellow-communists all over the world, maintained that "the State is the product of society at a certain stage of its development. The State is tantamount to an acknowledgment that the given society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it has broken up into irreconcilable antagonisms, of which it is powerless to rid itself. And in order that these antagonisms, these classes, with their opposing economic interests, may not devour one another and society itself in their sterile struggle, some force, standing seemingly above society, becomes necessary so as to moderate the force of their collisions and keep them within the bound of 'order.' And this force arising from society, but placing itself above it, which gradually separates itself from it, this force is the State."

Lenin has accepted this definition. It is his belief that it "expresses in all its clearness the conception of Marxism on the meaning of the State." Lenin then goes on to say that the State must be destroyed. It is separated from society and is antagonistic to the masses. As a matter of fact the class antagonisms of which we read so much are largely imaginary in

practical life. In civilised countries, at any rate, it is well within the compass of statesmanship to remove these rough edges when they do arise, and compose and unite society on an equitable basis.

Lenin has also accepted Engels's interpretation of the State as an armed force and a constant peril and engine of oppression to the masses. "The second distinguishing feature," he says, "is the establishment of a public power which is no longer identical with the population and which is organised as an armed force. This distinct public power is necessary because self-acting armed organisation of the population has become impossible with the break-up of society into classes . . . it consists not only of armed men, but also of material additions in the shape of prisons and repressive institutions."

In accepting this interpretation, Lenin does not in any way consider that the force of armed men and prisons is unnecessary in the paradise which he is seeking, but replaces the State-controlled bodies of armed men by "the self-acting armed organisation of the population." This force he euphemistically describes as "the armed proletariat." His view is that the State is impossible as a moderator between the classes, because the State has an armed force which the wicked capitalists control. His solution is to retain the same armed force and control it himself in order to impose on the working-classes his personal views as to what is for their good. The whole object of Lenin's

class war is to depose the State and enthrone Lenin. Surely Lenin has travelled far from the conceptions of Hegel, who asserted that the State is “the reality of *the moral idea and the image and reality of reason.*” Hegel, however, was merely a philosopher who never ran a revolution and was never compelled to find specious reasons for playing the autocrat when he professed to be the emancipator.

Many of us will recall the visit to Russia of Lieut.-Colonel Ward, the Labour M.P., and we make no apology for quoting passages from the letter which this gentleman addressed on November 28th, 1918, to Mr. Appleton, the Secretary of the General Federation of Trade Unions. Colonel Ward spoke of Russian conditions as he himself had found them :

“ . . . For the love of Allah, never more talk of the glories of revolution. I am in it here. Friend strikes down him he thinks his foe and finds the dead man his brother. Princes, peasants, plutocrats, workmen, rich and poor, go down together in one welter of blood and dirt. The Bolshevik thinks nothing of standing 500 social revolutionists against the wall and shooting them down before breakfast, because of some small petty difference of opinion as to whether the railways should be national or communal. How the gods must cry with rage that men can be so mad !

“ How ever any of our Labour leaders failed to grasp the Bolshevik creed of blood, and presumed to condone the horrors committed

by this mob of fanatical maniacs, I cannot imagine. . . .

“I have entered Ekaterinburg and heard the Bolshevik shells hurtle overhead. That is war ; but oh, the sight of the Cossacks pulling the lumps of wood up out of the well near where the Tsar was imprisoned, with an occasional grand duke mixed up with the timber ! Then the end of another poor piece of flesh recognised as a grand duchess, then another as the foreman at the near-by iron-works, and then a few workmen and workwomen, all murdered and mutilated just to prove the love for humanity !

“I quite believe it was necessary to destroy the old regime, to execute the Tsar and all his minions, but these swine whom we call Bolsheviks are mere blood-thirsty cut-throats who murder for the love of it, as some of their proclamations show. Their régime has destroyed more peasants and poor people in one year than did the Tsars in a hundred. War is horrible, but revolution is hellish.

DESTRUCTION OF INTELLECTUALS

“One other surprising similarity between Tsarism and the Bolshevik. They both try to destroy the intellectual elements of their country. They have made a regular onslaught on all the educational institutions in the country. I have so far not seen a single educational institution from Vladivostock to

Ekaterinburg that has not been the scene of bloody conflict. Every cadet (i.e. young schoolboy) that the Bolsheviks could lay their hands on has been killed, even where they were the sons of well-to-do peasants. Sometimes they were lined up and shot in hundreds. In one batch, as at Irkutsk, the oldest was 16.

“It appears that the German agents have told the poor ignorant Russian workman that the only way in which he can keep the country in his own hand is to destroy every educated man in it. The work is being done thoroughly wherever the Bolshevik rules. The German idea is that if every intellectual man and boy is killed, the conquest of Russia by German Kultur is certain. Let us hope that this diabolical boomerang will come home to the inhuman villains who started it.”

Whatever Lenin's intentions may have been, he has unchallengeably brought his country to an appalling state. M. Sokoloff, the well-known Russian democrat, is an authority worthy of the highest respect. This is his recent summary of Lenin's work :

“From the general point of view the Bolshevik policy has proved a decided failure. Lenin and Trotsky have succeeded in nothing but in bringing the country to a complete economic ruin. Their own official information, published in *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, shows that every branch of industry, commerce,

transport, and especially agriculture, is in a desperate state.

“The Soviet administration has degenerated into the rule of a new officialdom, which, being recruited from the politically uneducated and very often from the morally unscrupulous sections of the population, has proved a model of practical inefficiency. Soviets as such actually play no part in the public life. Everything is done by the officials nominated by the Central Government. In November last, on one of the sittings of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party, Lenin himself characterised the present state of affairs as a rule of knaves. There is hardly one number of *Pravda* or *Izvestia* that does not give a vivid picture of the general corruption of the Bolshevik administration. The honest and responsible elements of the Bolshevik Government realise very clearly the horrible state of affairs, but they are too timid to draw the true conclusions from it and recognise their failure. They prefer, like an ostrich, to hide their heads in the sand of florid talk.

“The fact is that all classes of the people, working-men included, are so worn out physically and exhausted morally that they are unable to make any effort, or to venture any actual opposition. It is very characteristic of the situation that the peasantry, being less exhausted than the town population, show much more energy in their opposition to Bolshevism. Uprisings and revolts break out

everywhere where the Communist Administration, supported by the Red Guards, try to enforce their law upon the unwilling countryside. The peasants' discontent has taken, indeed, proportions so menacing that the more prudent elements of Bolshevism try to persuade the leaders to adopt a more moderate course, but things have gone so far that no concessions are likely to appease the peasantry."

Of course Lenin does not like criticism. No autocrat ever did. He welcomed with open arms the British Delegation that returned from Russia early in June 1920. When, however, he discovered that the Britisher, with his idea of freedom and of government, was aghast at the spectacle presented by Russia under his rule, he promptly proceeded to abuse them: and not only them, but the British people. He handed to Alderman Turner, the chairman of the delegation, a letter addressed to the British workers, which is worth recording for a variety of reasons. We quote it in full:

"COMRADES,—First of all permit me to thank you for sending your Delegation with the object of acquainting itself with Soviet Russia. When your Delegation proposed to me to dispatch through its intermediary a letter to the British workers, and perhaps also a proposal to the British Government, I answered that I gratefully accept the first

suggestion, but that to the Government I must address myself not through the Labour Delegation, but directly on behalf of our Government, through Comrade Tchitcherin. We have in this way addressed ourselves many times to the British Government with the most formal and solemn proposal to start peace negotiations. These proposals are still being made intermittently by Comrade Litvinoff and Comrade Krassin and all our other representatives. The British Government consistently does not accept our proposals. It is, therefore, not surprising that with the Delegation of British Workers I should want to speak solely as with a delegation of workers, and not in my capacity as a representative of the Government of Soviet Russia, but in the capacity of an ordinary communist.

“I was not surprised to find that the view-point of some of the members of your Delegation does not coincide with that of the working class, but coincides with the view-point of the bourgeoisie, the class of exploiters. This is because in all capitalist countries the imperialist war has again exposed the inveterate abscess, namely, the desertion of the majority of Parliamentary and trade-union leaders of the workers to the camp of the bourgeoisie. Under the oblique pretence of the ‘defence of the country,’ actually defending the spoliatory interests of one of the two groups of the world bandits, the Anglo-French-American or the German group, they entered into an alliance with the bourgeoisie

against the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat; they covered up this treason with sentimental shopkeeper, reformist, and pacifist phrases about peaceful evolution, about constitutional measures, about democracy, etc. This was the case in all countries. It is not surprising that this very tendency existing in England has found expression in the composition of your Delegation.

ABUSE OF GREAT BRITAIN

“Shaw and Guest, members of your Delegation, were obviously surprised and hurt by my statement that England, notwithstanding our peace proposals, notwithstanding the declarations of her Government, continues her intervention, is carrying on a war against us, helping Wrangel in the Crimea and the White Guards in Poland—and they asked me whether I have proofs to this effect, whether I can state how many trains with munitions were delivered by England to Poland, etc.

“I replied that for the purpose of getting access to the secret agreements of the British Government it is necessary to overthrow it by revolutionary means, and to lay hold of all documents of its foreign policy, as was done by us in 1917.

“Every educated person, everyone genuinely interested in politics, knew even before the revolution that the Tsar had secret treaties with the robber Governments of England,

France, United States, Italy and Japan, for the partition of booty about Constantinople, Galicia, Armenia, Syria, Mesopotamia, etc. Only liars and hypocrites (excepting, of course, quite ignorant and illiterate people) could deny this, or pretend not to know it. But without revolution we would never be able to get the secret documents of the robber Governments of the capitalist class. Those leaders or representatives of the British proletariat—whether they be Parliamentarians, trade unionists, journalists, or other people—who pretend that they are ignorant of the existence of secret treaties of England, France, the United States, Italy, Japan and Poland, for the plundering of other countries, for partition of booty, and who do not carry on a revolutionary struggle for the exposure of such treaties, show thereby needlessly once again that they are faithful servants of the capitalists. We knew this long ago. We are exposing this both here and in all other countries of the world. The visit to Russia of a delegation of British workers will accelerate the exposure of such leaders in England as well.

“My above-mentioned interview with members of your delegation took place on May 26th. A day later we received radios saying that Bonar Law conceded in the British Parliament that military help was rendered to Poland in October ‘for the defence against Russia’ (of course, only for defence, only in October! In England there are still ‘influ-

ential Labour leaders ' helping the capitalists to deceive the workers !) while the periodical *The New Statesman*, one of the most moderate of all moderate among middle-class newspapers or periodicals, wrote about the new tanks being shipped from England to Poland, more powerful than those used during the war against the Germans. Is it possible, then, not to laugh at those ' leaders ' of the British workers who, with an air of hurt innocence, are asking what ' proofs ' there are that England is making war on Russia and is helping Poland and the White Guards in the Crimea ?

INTELLECTUAL SLAVERY

“ Members of the delegation have asked me what I think to be of greater importance, whether the formation in England of a consistent revolutionary Communist party or immediate help of the working masses in England to the cause of peace with Russia. I replied that the answer to this question depends upon the convictions of those who give the answer. Genuine partisans of the liberation of the workers from the yoke of capital cannot possibly oppose the foundation of a communist party that alone is able to educate the working masses not after the bourgeois and shopkeeper fashion, that alone is able actually to expose, deride, and disgrace ' leaders ' who are capable of doubting whether England is helping Poland, etc. It need not be appre-

hended that there will be in England too many communists, as even a small communist party is not existent there. But if anyone persists still in intellectual slavery under the bourgeoisie and continues to share the middle-class prejudices concerning 'democracy' (bourgeois democracy!), pacifism, etc., then of course such people could only injure the proletariat to an even greater extent, should it occur to them to call themselves communists and to join the Third International.

"Such people are not capable of anything except the adoption of 'sweetened resolutions' against intervention, which are made up merely of shopkeepers' phrases. In a certain respect these resolutions are useful inasmuch as the 'old leaders' (the partisans of bourgeois democracy, peaceful methods, etc., etc.) will make themselves ridiculous in the eyes of the masses, exposing themselves the sooner the more resolutions they pass, which, being empty and non-committal, are unattended by revolutionary action. To every one his due, let the communists work directly through their party for the enlightenment of the revolutionary consciousness of the workers. Let those who supported the 'defence of the country' during the imperialistic war for the partition of the world, who supported the 'defence' of the secret treaty of English capitalists with the Tsar for the plundering of Turkey, let those who 'are ignorant' of the help to Poland and the White Guards in Russia rendered by Great Britain, let them

quicker bring up to a ludicrous figure the number of their 'pacifist resolutions.' The sooner they will share the fate of Kerensky, the Mensheviks, and social revolutionists in Russia.

RED AND WHITE 'TERRORS'

"Some of the members of your delegation have asked me with surprise concerning Red Terror, about the lack of the freedom of the Press, about the lack of freedom of assembly, about our persecution of Mensheviks and Menshevik workers, etc. I replied that the real culprits of the Terror are the imperialists of England and her 'allies,' who have been and are conducting White Terror in Finland and Hungary, in India and Ireland, who have been and are supporting Judenitch, Koltchak, Denikin, Pilsudsky, and Wrangel. Our Red Terror is a defence of the working class against the exploiters, it is the suppression of the resistance of the exploiters with whom the social revolutionists, the Mensheviks, and an insignificant number of Menshevik workers align themselves. The freedom of Press and assembly in a bourgeois democracy is tantamount to the freedom of the well-to-do to plot against the working people. It means freedom of bribing and buying up newspapers by the capitalist. I have so often explained this in the Press that it was not very entertaining to me to repeat myself.

"However, two days after my interview

with your delegates the newspapers published a dispatch saying that in addition to the arrests of Monatte and Lorient in France, Sylvia Pankhurst has been arrested in England. This is the best answer of the British Government to the question which the non-communist 'leaders' of British workers, captivated by bourgeois prejudices, are even afraid to ask, namely the question, Against which class is the Terror directed? Whether against the oppressed and exploited, or against the oppressors and exploiters; whether it is a question of affording 'Freedom' to the capitalist to plunder, defraud, stupefy the working people, or whether the working people are to be 'free' from the yoke of capitalists, speculators, property holders. Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst is the representative of the interests of hundreds of millions of people who are oppressed by British and other capitalists, and it is on this account that she becomes an object of the White Terror, and is deprived of freedom. The same 'leaders' of workers who are conducting a non-communist policy are 99 per cent. representatives of the bourgeoisie of its deceit, of its prejudices.

"In conclusion, I once more thank you, Comrades, for sending us your delegation. The fact of its getting acquainted with Soviet Russia, notwithstanding the hostility of many of them towards the Soviet system and the dictatorship of the proletariat, notwithstanding the fact that it is to an extraordinary extent in the captivity of bourgeois prejudices,

will unavoidably result in accelerating the failure of capitalism in the whole world.

N. LENIN."

Moscow, May 30th, 1920.

As to the actual conditions in Russia, Mr. Turner brought back most valuable evidence. We quote passages from an interview published by *The Yorkshire Post* of June 10th, 1920 :

THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVESTIGATION

"Our investigations in Russia," said Alderman Turner, "were not hampered or interfered with in any way by the Soviet authorities. We were able to see anybody we cared to see. Each of us had names of persons we wanted to see—opponents of the Government, non-party Russians, and members of the 'intelligentsia'—and facilities were afforded for our getting about in and around Petrograd and Moscow.

"Petrograd seems to be in a pitiful condition. It looked worse because there are no shops except those where illicit trade is done. The condition of the streets is very bad, huge chunks of wooden pavement being pulled up ; but it was cleaner than I had expected. In some towns there was a 'health week' in April, when every householder was called upon to do some cleaning up inside and out.

"The big thing that struck me, in Petrograd especially, was the tremendous hunger of the people. Outside the villages they are being fed to the extent only of 50 % of their physical

needs. The peasants are much better off in that respect.

“Everywhere we were struck by the official determination to increase productivity, which has gone down enormously owing to defective machinery, bad transport, and physical inefficiency following hunger. By pamphlets, lectures, decrees, and extra food allowances, the people are encouraged to increase production, and the trade unions are co-operating fully in this endeavour.

“Railway engines are fed with wood fuel. Both they and the rolling stock look derelict objects. The train journey from Petrograd to Moscow, which used to take eleven hours, now takes eighteen or twenty. When trade is resumed with Russia I should say there would be good opportunities for this country to supply railway stock.

COMPULSORY LABOUR

“The Bolsheviks act upon the theory that he who will not work shall not eat, or vote, and labour is compulsory. Over and above this, there is a system of voluntary labour for street cleaning and railway repairing, but, generally speaking, it is the strong-minded communists who take part in this. Everybody must commend the efforts that are being made to feed, house, and clothe the children, two million of whom are being specially cared for. There has been a big fight against consumption, typhus, smallpox, cholera, and filth.

“I was agreeably surprised,” he said, “to find Lenin a much less ferocious-looking person than the pictures in all parts of the big cities represent him to be. I think Lenin is an argumentative dogmatist. He is very emphatic in defence of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and believes that capitalism cannot be overthrown except by force. I had to disagree with him most emphatically, and we agreed to differ, neither being able to convince the other. He is highly educated, very free in his observations, and I think he means immensely well.”

Land has been nationalised, but the application of communism is incomplete, and Alderman Turner says that there is a clash of interests between the peasant and the townsman. There is inequality of franchise as between the two, townsmen having greater representation on the Soviets.

RULE BY MINORITY

“Although they are in power, the Communists are in a minority,” remarked Alderman Turner. “The Social Revolutionaries do not accept their theories, which, they say, are opposed to Socialism and personal liberty, but they have composed their quarrels for the duration of the Polish offensive.

“How have the Communists seized power? Well, they happen to be cleverer than the other chaps.

THE GOD OF COMPULSION

“Compulsory military service is in force, with provision for the exemption of Tolstoyans and members of certain religious bodies. Work is compulsory. There is no right to strike. A man may not change his job without the permission of his trade union. And now there is compulsory attendance at school for adult illiterates as well as children. In fact,” commented Alderman Turner, “compulsion is one of the Bolshevik gods.

“I am in favour of equal franchise,” he added, “which they have not, and I am a pacifist, which they are not. The suppression of the right to strike is supported by the argument that if a man struck it would be against himself, as the unions themselves govern the working conditions.”

Alderman Turner said the delegation made special inquiries regarding the Red Terror, and found it was “certain that the White Terror and the Red Terror have both existed, and as long as the country is at war will continue to exist.

“The Bolsheviks say they are surrounded by spies and by persons who helped Koltchak, Denikin, and Judenitch. They abolished the death penalty in February last, and only reintroduced it in May when the new Polish offensive started. Arrests have been made under the orders of the Extraordinary Commissions. We were given the number of

executions in the past three years ; most of them were for military offences, brigandage, treason, and counter-revolutionary activity. We saw numerous people under arrest, the bulk of them being in custody for illicit speculation and trading."

CHAPTER VIII

THE BOLSHEVIK THREAT TO THE WORLD

UP to and during the year 1917 Bolshevism was purely local to Russia. It is true that the fame of the new social order had spread through the world, and fanatics and theorists were agog for the latest folly. But up to 1917 Russia had Bolshevism to itself. A very different tale must be told to-day.

In Russia, it should be remembered, Bolshevism was an entirely new creation, and it was accepted by the people in despair, weariness, and misery. The Russians had been betrayed and lay under heavy oppression. Their heroic armies had been led by traitors to slaughter after slaughter. Nothing was left to them but peace, and peace at any price and on any terms, and so abject was their condition that they consented to, or at any rate were not nerved to oppose, the violent destruction of the existing system in the belief that something less terrible might be built on the ruins.

In 1917 Bolshevism was intensely pacifist,

to-day it is militaristic and aggressively offensive. This is where the supreme danger to Western civilisation lies. Had Bolshevism remained local and peculiar to Russia, it would have brought evil upon Russia but might not gravely have injured the world. The new Bolshevism, however, has for its first aim world domination. The neighbouring buffer States are to be invaded and conquered for communism, Poland is to be wiped out, and Lenin is to stretch out a long arm and get Germany in his grip and through Germany extend his creed to the whole of Europe. The Moscow *Pravda* agrees with Tchitcherin, the Bolshevik Commissary for Foreign Affairs, "That a common frontier between Russia and Germany is absolutely necessary for our work of economic reconstruction."

This at least is plain language. These border States, upon whose maintenance intact the great men of the Allies counted so heavily for world peace in the future, are to be eliminated. The Bolsheviks are moving westwards to dominate new lands; already they have fined Lithuanian and Polish cities and have confiscated private wealth wherever their advancing armies found it. Nor have they forgotten the East. True to their programme of world revolution, they are pressing forward both East and West. For the East there is the All-Asia Bolshevik Congress, for the West the Moscow International.

Lenin has added a new formula on revolution to that supplied by Engels. According

to Engels, "Revolution is an act in which one section of the population imposes its will upon the other by rifles, bayonets, guns, and other such authoritarian means." This is not enough for Lenin, who has made the startling pronouncement that "an organised proletariat of one country may impose its will on the bourgeoisie of another to free the proletariat from the latter's hateful rule." It is Lenin's deliberate intention that the organised proletariat of Russia should become the means of emancipating the rest of the world from any form of rule which is hateful to Lenin and which does not correspond to his own mad scheme of communism.

The Moscow International has become exceedingly active, it works in the pits, factories, and workshops of Great Britain to-day. "Peaceful penetration" is its method, and its agents are very numerous. The British Independent Labour Party has been in correspondence with the Third (Communist) International of Moscow. The British Independent Labour Party was so deeply intrigued with the prospect of having a working basis with a real live communistic Government that, acting on a resolution of the Party Conference, it arranged for a consultation with regard to the possibility of the establishment of an all-inclusive International of which it might be a constituent part. The British Conference, with a view to eliciting the programme and conditions of affiliation with the Moscow International, sent to Moscow the

following twelve questions: which we quote from *The Times* of July 30th, 1920:

“ 1. To what extent does the Third International demand a rigid adherence in each country to the methods outlined in its programme ?

2. Will the Third International state how they conceive the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat as applied in Great Britain ?

3. To what extent does the Third International agree to the use of parliamentary methods ?

4. What is the attitude of the Third International to the I.L.P. remaining affiliated to the Labour Party ?

5. Is the Soviet system of government a fundamental principle of the Third International ?

6. If so, to what extent does the Third International recognise the possibility of diverse forms of Soviet government in different countries ?

7. Must societies affiliated to the Third International maintain that Communism and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat can only be introduced by the use of armed force, or will they admit to membership parties that leave this question open ?

8. In what respect does the Third International consider that Communism differs from other forms of Socialism ?

9. Is it a condition to the Third Interna-

tional to accept Communism as defined in the answer to question 8 ?

10. Is the Third International willing to send representatives to the proposed Swiss Conference of the Left Wing Socialist parties ?

11. Is the Third International prepared to convene an international conference to consider its programme, methods and constitution ?

12. If so, what would the basis of representation and voting power be at such a conference ? ”

The Executive Committee of the Moscow International evidently regarded question 8 as pivotal, and answers it first. It is a long reply, cursorily surveying half a century of socialist activity, and directing a great amount of virulence against the “centre” of the Second International—in England, Ramsay Macdonald and Philip Snowden; in France, Jean Longuet; in Germany, Kautzky and Haase; in Italy, Modigliani, Turatti, Treves; in Russia, Axelrod, Martoff—whom it accuses of playing during the war the rôle of Pontius Pilate, “washing their hands of the guilt.” The offence of the “centre” is that it does not foment revolution and sedition—“it persuades the workers that Socialism can only be obtained by constitutional means . . . it carries on no kind of agitation amongst the British soldiers and sailors.” The argument is concluded in this way :

“In what respect does Communism differ

from other forms of Socialism ? We reply : There are no other forms, there is only Communism. Whatever else goes under the name of Socialism is either wilful deception by the lackeys of the bourgeoisie or the self-delusion of persons or groups who hesitate to choose between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie ; who hesitate between a life-and-death struggle and the rôle of assistants to the expiring bourgeoisie."

APPLICATION TO ENGLAND

The second question, asking how the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat is applicable to Great Britain is taken next. The answer, in a great sweep, surveys the "merciless capitalist dictatorship," in England from the sixteenth century onwards ; and if English people have learnt their own history differently from the way the Communist reads it, it is because of "a brazen lie," wielding influence because 'the labour aristocracy of the British working class' has forgotten certain turbulent passages of the last and preceding centuries. Mr. Churchill's phrase that the Labour Party is incapable of governing is distorted as meaning that "any Parliament with a Labour majority really intending to fight the bourgeoisie will be dispersed with the aid of expeditionary forces and of the White Guard of the bourgeoisie." There follows this passage :

"Whoever tells the British working class

that it can overthrow the capitalist dictatorship in the British Empire through any other means than the dictatorship of the proletariat, that is, by taking the full power into their own hands, by depriving of political power all those who defend capitalist exploitation and by organising a Red labour army, deceives himself and others. . . . Had the British working class gained power by means of Parliamentary elections, by means of so-called democracy . . . the Communists are not for a moment freed of their duty of saying to the workers the following :—(1) That it is most unlikely that the British bourgeoisie, the most energetic and most skilful oppressor of national movements, the richest in the world, the ruler not only of millions of British workers, but of hundreds of millions of the peasants and the workers of the Colonies—it is most unlikely that this bourgeoisie will give up its power without a struggle and become subject to the paper will of a Parliament ; (2) that, therefore, the workers should prepare not for an easy Parliamentary victory but for victory by a heavy civil war ; (3) that should the workers have succeeded in gaining power without this civil war, that would only signify that the necessity of civil war would confront the working class so soon as it set out to realise its will to defend itself from capitalist exploitation and speculation ; so soon as it began to liberate the masses in the Colonies now oppressed by British Imperialism.”

The Communist executive declare this to be the reply not only to the second interrogation, but also to the seventh, where the inquiry was whether societies affiliated with the Third International must maintain that Communism and the dictatorship of the proletariat can only be introduced by the use of armed force.

The refrain of civil war and world revolution runs through the answers to several of the other questions. "The bourgeoisie cannot be defeated without civil war" is part of the answer to question 1, which inquired as to the necessity for "rigid adherence" to Communist methods. "The Communist International," it is declared, "can permit no discrepancy between words and deeds." And again, with a definite allusion to the English Labour Party—"the Communist International cannot, and absolutely refuses, to admit within its ranks representatives of parties which still confide in those whose words and deeds do not coincide."

A profound distrust of Parliamentary action is avowed. "The Communist party does not look upon Parliament as an organ fit for the exercise of the dictatorship of the proletariat or as an apparatus of its power." Parliamentary representation is apparently only worth while where the struggle is only just beginning, and the electoral campaign, and Parliament itself, can be used for the purposes of Communist propaganda. The revolutionary methods of using the Parliamentary system

are to be very different from those of the "opportunist" methods. They will be only "an auxiliary organ of the Communist work in the masses." "The Parliamentary Communist faction should be entirely subordinated to the Communist party, to the leading organ of the revolutionary mass struggle."

" OPPORTUNIST " LEADERS

The Reply goes on to define the attitude of the Moscow International to the Labour Party, the Independent Labour Party, and to the British Socialist Party, "which belongs at one and the same time to both the Third International and to the Labour Party." It scourges the "opportunist" leaders, who are retarding "the revolutionary development of the masses," and says:—"It is thus evident that no kind of organisation seeking to carry out a Communist policy could possibly belong to the Labour Party," and after an energetic struggle against the majority policy it would have to leave the party and persuade the trade unions to go over directly to Communism. Apparently, however, affiliation with the Moscow International and with the Labour Party are not incompatible if all the time an energetic struggle is maintained against the non-Communist majority.

The conclusion of a very long document is addressed to "the Communists of the Independent Labour Party." Here there is a vision of the coming of a day when Com-

munism, sweeping through Europe and enlisting the Eastern nations in its movement, will meet Britain and America in mortal conflict, in a world war.

It is probable that upon throwing off the chains of the capitalist Governments, the revolutionary proletariat of Europe will meet the resistance of Anglo-Saxon capital in the persons of British and American capitalists who will attempt to blockade it. It is then possible that the revolutionary proletariat of Europe will arise in union with the peoples of the East and commence a revolutionary struggle, the scene of which will be the entire world, to deal a final blow to British and American capitalism.

The reply holds out to the British working class the glorious privilege of being pioneers in this titanic struggle, and to that end it calls on the revolutionary elements in England to unite on "the rockbound programme of the Communist International" and to co-ordinate their activities with those of "the national movements of Ireland, India, and Egypt," in order that "the revolutionary masses of the British Colonies may free themselves with the aid of the British workers, and not against them, or even in the face of their passive protests."

Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, in *Forward*, comments on Moscow's reply to the Independent Labour Party. The Moscow leaders, he writes, are no fireside revolutionists, no sloshy

universal love *poseurs*. When they say revolution they mean bloodshed and violence. The Independent Labour Party and the Third International are oil and water and will not mix.

“ The argument in the Moscow reply is perfectly clear, and there is no further excuse for the Independent Labour Party playing with words. It must now settle once and for all where it stands. The Moscow reply tells how to do this. The critical point is not Parliamentary power, but an effective movement for revolution. We can have victory only by a heavy civil war. If we come to the Moscow conclusions regarding the Labour Party we ought to have nothing to do with that Party. Our affiliation to it is dishonest. No honest and intelligent supporter of the Third International can be a Labour Party candidate. Therefore, before the Independent Labour Party can join the Third International, it must not only pass the resolution, but must drastically reform its structure. It must cease to be an Independent Labour Party. The issue is this, Are we to agree that the seizure of power by a few men, who are the leaders of a party, is to be the socialist method? We may dress up that bald issue in what robes we like, but it is upon that that we have to decide now that Moscow has officially spoken.”

Mr. Ramsay Macdonald has spoken. It is unfortunate that his followers do not “ tremble and obey.” They are still on countless plat-

forms voicing the blessedness of the Third International which their leader has condemned, and are doing their utmost to seduce unthinking people into a support of Lenin's plan to overthrow civilisation.

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APPENDIX

THE RUSSIAN SOVIET CONSTITUTION

ADOPTED BY THE FIFTH ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF SOVIETS AT ITS SITTING OF JULY 10TH, 1918

PART I

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OF THE WORKING AND EXPLOITED CLASSES

CHAPTER I

1. Russia is declared a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Delegates. All the central and local power is vested in these Soviets.

2. The Soviet Republic of Russia is established on the basis of a free union of free nations, as a federation of national Soviet republics.

CHAPTER II

3. The congress of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Delegates, considering it to be its fundamental duty to abolish all exploitation of one set of human beings by another, and the division of society into classes ; to suppress summarily all exploiters ; to establish

a socialist organisation of society and the triumph of Socialism in all countries, further decrees :

- (a) With a view to carrying through the socialisation of land, all private property in land is abrogated, and all land is declared to be the common property of the people, and is handed over to the workers without compensation to its previous owners, on the basis of equalised use.
- (b) All forests, mines, and waters of national importance, as well as all live stock and fixtures, model estates and agricultural concerns, are declared to be the property of the nation.
- (c) As a first step towards the complete transference to the Soviet Republic of Workers and Peasants of all factories, works, mines, railways, and other means of production and transport, the Soviet law establishing factory control by the workers and the Supreme Council of National Economy is hereby confirmed with a view to ensuring the power of the workers over the exploiters.
- (d) The third congress of Soviets regards the Soviet law repudiating the loans contracted by the Government of the Tsar, landowners, and bourgeoisie as a first blow to the international capitalistic banking and financial system, and confidently expects that the Soviet regime will unswervingly proceed along the path which will lead to the complete victory of the international workers' revolt against the yoke of capitalism.
- (e) The nationalisation of all banks is hereby

confirmed as one of the means for the emancipation of the toiling masses from the yoke of capitalism.

- (f) With a view to the abolition of all parasitic sections of society, and to the economic organisation of labour, a universal industrial conscription is introduced.
- (g) With a view to securing full power to the workers and to preventing the possibility of the re-establishment of the power of the exploiters, it is hereby decreed that all workers be armed, that a Socialist Red Army of workers and peasants be organised, and that the propertied classes be disarmed.

CHAPTER III

4. Proclaiming its firm resolve to free humanity from the grip of financial capitalism and imperialism which have covered the world with blood in this most criminal of wars, the third congress of Soviets whole-heartedly endorses the Soviet Government's policy of repudiation of all secret treaties, of organisation on the widest scale, of fraternisation with the workers and peasants of the armies at present fighting each other, and of the attainment by revolutionary means of a democratic peace of the workers without annexations and indemnities, on the basis of the free self-determination of all nations.

5. For the same reasons the third congress of Soviets insists on the complete repudiation of the barbarous policy of bourgeois civilisation which has built up the well-being of the exploiters of a few privileged nations on the enslavement of

hundreds of toilers in Asia, in the colonies in general, and in small countries.

6. The third congress of Soviets welcomes the policy of the council of people's commissaries which has proclaimed the complete independence of Finland, has begun the evacuation of Russian troops in Persia, and has granted freedom of self-determination to Armenia.

CHAPTER IV

7. The third All-Russian congress of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Delegates considers it to be impossible during the present decisive struggle of the proletariat against its exploiters to admit the exploiters to any organ of government and authority. The authority must belong entirely and exclusively to the toiling masses and their authorised representatives—the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Delegates.

8. At the same time, while trying to bring about a truly free and voluntary, and for that reason complete and stable, union of the working classes of all the nationalities in Russia, the third congress of the Soviets limits itself to the establishment of the fundamental principles for the federation of the Soviet Republics of Russia, but leaving it to the workers and peasants of each nationality to come to an independent decision at their authorised Soviet congresses as to their adhesion and the terms thereof to the Federal Government, and to the other Federal Soviet institutions.

PART II

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERAL SOVIET REPUBLIC

CHAPTER V

9. The principal task of the present constitution of the Russian Socialist Federal Republic, adapted to the needs of the present period of transition, consists in the establishment of the dictatorship of the town and country proletariat and the poorest peasantry in the form of a powerful All-Russian Soviet Government for the complete suppression of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of exploitation of man by man, and the establishment of Socialism which will know no division into classes and no government power.

10. The Russian Republic is a free socialist community of all those who toil in Russia. All the power within the boundaries of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic belongs to the entire labouring population of the country organised in town and village Soviets.

11. The Soviets in those regions which are distinguished by special conditions of life, and are peopled by distant nationalities, may form autonomous regional unions, at the head of which, as well as of any regional unions in general, stand the regional congresses of Soviets and their executives. These autonomous regional unions form, on the federal basis, part of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic.

12. The supreme authority in the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic is vested in the

All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and in the intervals between its meetings to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

13. With a view to ensuring to the workers true liberty of conscience the Church is disestablished in the State and in the school, and freedom of religious and anti-religious propaganda is granted to all citizens.

14. With a view to ensuring to the workers true freedom of expressions of opinions, the R.S.F.S.R. abolishes dependence of the Press on capitalism, and puts at the disposal of the working class and the poor peasantry all technical and material means for the issue of newspapers, books, pamphlets, and all other publications, and guarantees their free circulation throughout the country.

15. With a view to ensuring to the workers true freedom of meeting, the R.S.F.S.R., recognising the right of the citizens of the Soviet Republic to hold assemblies, meetings, processions, etc., puts at the disposal of the working class and the poor peasantry all premises, inclusive of furniture, lighting, and heating, suitable for holding public meetings.

16. With a view to ensuring to the workers real freedom of association, the R.S.F.S.R., having broken the economic and political power of the propertied classes, and having thus removed all obstacles which, in a bourgeois society, prevented the workers and poorest peasants from enjoying freedom of association and action, is offering to the workers and peasants all manner of material and other co-operation in order to organise and to unite them.

17. With a view to ensuring to the workers real access to knowledge, the R.S.F.S.R. considers it to be its duty to provide the workers and

poorest peasants with a complete and all-round free education.

18. The R.S.F.S.R. considers labour to be the duty of every citizen of the republic, and its watchword is—"He who does not work shall not eat."

19. With a view to safeguarding in their entirety the conquests of the great Workers' and Peasants' Revolution, the R.S.F.S.R. considers it to be the duty of all citizens of the Republic to defend their socialist fatherland and establishes universal obligatory military service. The honourable privilege of armed defence of the Revolution is reserved to the workers only, while the non-labouring classes of the community are subjected to other military duties.

20. Starting from the principle of the solidarity of the workers of all nations, the R.S.F.S.R. grants all political rights of Russian citizens to foreigners settled in Russia for the purpose of work, and belonging to the working class or to the section of the peasantry which does not employ hired labour, and further authorises the local Soviets to grant to such foreigners without any annoying formalities the rights of Russian citizenship.

21. The R.S.F.S.R. grants the right of asylum to all foreigners persecuted for political and religious offences.

22. The R.S.F.S.R., recognising as it does equal rights of citizens, regardless of the racial and national distinctions, declares the conferring of any privileges whatever on those grounds, and likewise any persecution of national minorities or the limitation of their citizen rights, to be a violation of the fundamental laws of the Republic.

23. Guided as it is by the interests of the

working class as a whole, the R.S.F.S.R. deprives individual persons, and groups of all such persons, of rights which they use to the detriment of the interests of the Socialist Revolution.

PART III

CONSTITUTION OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT. THE ORGANISATION OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

CHAPTER VI

The All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', Cossacks', and Red Guards' delegates :

24. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets constitutes the highest authority of the R.S.F.S.R.

25. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets consists of representatives of town Soviets at the rate of one delegate per 25,000 electors, and of representatives of the provincial congresses of Soviets at the rate of one delegate per 125,000 inhabitants.

(1) In the event of the Provincial Congress of Soviets not preceding the All-Russian Congress, the delegates to the latter are sent direct by the district congresses.

(2) In the event of the regional congress of Soviets immediately preceding the All-Russian Congress, the delegates to the latter may be sent by the regional congress.

26. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets is convened by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee at least twice a year.

27. An extraordinary All-Russian Congress is convened by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on its own initiative, or on the demand

of Soviets in localities numbering not less than one-third of the whole population of the Republic.

28. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets elects an All-Russian Central Executive Committee, consisting of not more than 200 members.

29. The All-Russian Central Executive Committee is entirely responsible to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets.

30. In the interval between the meetings of the congresses, the supreme authority of the Republic is the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

CHAPTER VII

The All-Russian Central Executive Committee :

31. The All-Russian C.E.C. constitutes the supreme legislative, administrative, and controlling organ of the R.S.F.S.R.

32. The All-Russian C.E.C. gives a general direction to the activities of the Workers' and Peasants' Government and of all the organs of the Soviet authority in the country, co-ordinates the legislative and administrative work, and watches over the working of the Soviet constitution, and the application of decrees of the All-Russian Congresses of Soviets, and of the central organs of the Soviet Government.

33. The All-Russian C.E.C. examines and ratifies drafts of decrees, and other proposals brought in by the council of people's commissaries or by separate departments, and also issues its own decrees and regulations.

34. The All-Russian C.E.C. convenes the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, to which it renders accounts of its activities and presents reports on general policy and individual subjects.

35. The All-Russian C.E.C. appoints the Council of People's Commissaries for the general conduct of affairs of the R.S.F.S.R., and the departments (people's commissariats) for the management of different branches of administration.

36. The members of the All-Russian C.E.C. work in the government departments (people's commissariats) or are commissioned with special work by the C.E.C.

CHAPTER VIII

37. The Council of People's Commissaries is entrusted with the general conduct of affairs in the R.S.F.S.R.

38. In the fulfilment of these duties, the Council of People's Commissaries issues decrees, regulations, instructions, and in general takes all measures required for the regular and steady development of State life.

39. The Council of People's Commissaries immediately informs the All-Russian C.E.C. of all its decisions and decrees.

40. The All-Russian C.E.C. has the right to abrogate or to suspend all regulations and decisions of the Council of People's Commissaries.

41. All important political regulations and decisions of the Council of People's Commissaries are referred to the All-Russian C.E.C. for examination and ratification.

Note.—Measures of great urgency may be passed by the Council of People's Commissaries without reference to the All-Russian C.E.C.

42. The members of the Council of People's Commissaries are at the head of various People's Commissariats.

43. There are eighteen People's Commissariats—i.e. :

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| (a) Foreign Affairs. | (l) Ways and Means of Communications. |
| (b) Military Affairs. | |
| (c) Naval Affairs. | (m) Agriculture. |
| (d) Home Affairs. | (n) Commerce and Industries. |
| (e) Justice. | |
| (f) Labour. | (o) Food Supply. |
| (g) Social Welfare. | (p) State Control. |
| (h) Education. | (q) Supreme Council of National Economy. |
| (i) Post and Telegraph. | |
| (j) Nationalities. | (r) Public Health. |
| (k) Finance. | |

44. In each Commissariat a board is formed, the members of which are confirmed by the Council of People's Commissaries.

45. A People's Commissary has the power personally to decide all questions pertaining to his department, bringing them at the same time to the notice of his board. In the event of the disapproval by the board of the decisions taken by the commissary, it is entitled to lodge a protest to the Council of People's Commissaries or at the presidium of the All-Russian C.E.C. Individual members of the board have the same right.

46. The Council of People's Commissaries is wholly responsible to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and to the All-Russian C.E.C.

47. The People's Commissaries and boards attached to the Commissariats are wholly responsible to the Council of People's Commissaries and to the All-Russian C.E.C.

48. The title of People's Commissaries belongs exclusively to members of the Council of People's

Commissaries in charge of the general affairs of the R.S.F.S.R., and cannot be assumed by any other representatives of either the central or local Soviet authority.

CHAPTER IX

49. The competence of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee extends to all questions of national importance. They are :

- (a) The ratification, alteration, and amplification of the constitution of the R.S.F.S.R.
- (b) The general direction of the entire foreign and domestic policy of the R.S.F.S.R.
- (c) The demarcation and alteration of frontiers as well as the alienation of parts of the territory of the R.S.F.S.R. or of its rights and privileges.
- (d) The demarcation of frontiers and competence of the regional groups of Soviets forming part of the R.S.F.S.R., and also arbitration in case of disputes among them.
- (e) The incorporation of new members of the Soviet Republic into the R.S.F.S.R. and their recognition of the withdrawal of parts from the Russian Federation.
- (f) The general administrative division of the territory of the R.S.F.S.R. and the recognition of regional groupings (unions).
- (g) The establishment and alteration of the system of measures, weights, and money in the territory of the R.S.F.S.R.
- (h) Relations with foreign powers, declaration of war, conclusion of peace.
- (i) The conclusion of loans, customs, and com-

mercial treaties, and of financial agreements.

- (k) The drawing up of a basis and of a general plan for the whole economic organisation and its branches in the territory of the R.S.F.S.R.
- (l) The ratification of the budget of the R.S.F.S.R.
- (m) The fixing of State taxes and dues.
- (n) The establishment of a basis of organisation of the armed forces of the R.S.F.S.R.
- (o) National legislation, organisation of courts of justice, administration of justice, civil and criminal legislation, etc.
- (p) The nomination and dismissal of individual members of the council of people's commissaries, as well as of the council of people's commissaries as a whole, also the confirmation of the president of the council of people's commissaries.
- (r) The issue of general rules and regulations in respect of acquisition and loss of naturalisation and of rights enjoyed by foreigners in the territory of the Republic.
- (s) The right of partial and full amnesty.

50. In addition to the above-enumerated matters, all other questions which they consider subject to their decisions are within the competence of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

51. Within the sole competence of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets are :

- (a) The establishment, amplification, and alteration of the basis of the Soviet constitution.
- (b) The ratification of peace treaties.

52. The decision on matters indicated in points (c) and (h) is left to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee only in the event of the impossibility of summoning an All-Russian Congress of Soviets.

CHAPTER X

THE ORGANISATION OF THE LOCAL SOVIET AUTHORITIES

Soviet Congresses :

53. The constitution of the congresses of Soviets is as follows :

- (a) The regional congresses consist either of representatives of town and district Soviets on the basis of one delegate per 25,000 inhabitants, and from towns on the basis of one delegate per 5,000 electors (but not exceeding 500 delegates for the whole region), or of representatives of provincial congresses of Soviets elected on the same basis, in the event of such congress immediately preceding the regional congress.
- (b) The provincial congresses consist of representatives of town and valost congresses on the basis of one delegate per 19,000 inhabitants, and from towns on the basis of one delegate per 2,000 electors (but not exceeding 300 delegates for the whole province), provided, in the event of the district congress immediately preceding the provincial congress, the elections on the same basis take place in the district, and not in the valost congresses.
- (c) District congresses consist of representa-

tives of village Soviets on the basis of one delegate per 1,000 inhabitants (but not exceeding 300 delegates for the whole district).

- (d) Valost congresses consist of representatives of all the village Soviets of the valost on the basis of one delegate for every ten members of the Soviet.

(1) The district congresses are attended by Soviet representatives from towns of not more than 10,000 inhabitants. Soviets of localities of less than 1,000 inhabitants combine for the purpose of electing delegates to the district congress.

(2) Village Soviets, with a membership of less than ten, send one delegate to the valost congress.

54. The Soviet congresses are convened by the executive committees representing the Soviet authority in the area concerned, either on their own initiative or on the demand of Soviets in localities with a population of not less than one-third of the whole population of the said area, at least twice a year in the region, every three months in provinces and districts, and once a month in valosts.

55. The Congress of Soviets (regional, county, district, and communal) elects its executive committee, the membership of which must exceed :
(a) twenty-five in a region and province,
(b) twenty in a district, (c) ten in a community.
The executive committee is wholly responsible to the congress of Soviets which has elected it.

56. Within the limits of its competence, the congress of Soviets (regional, provincial, district, and communal) constitutes the supreme authority in its respective territory ; in the intervals between the congresses that authority is exercised by the executive committee.

CHAPTER XI

The Soviets' delegates are elected as follows :

57. (a) In towns, on the basis of one delegate per 1,000 inhabitants (but not less than 50 and not exceeding 1,000 members). (b) In rural places (villages, church-villages, Cossack cantons, boroughs, towns with a population under 10,000, nomads' camps and homesteads, etc.). on the basis of one delegate per 100 of the population (but not less than three and not exceeding fifty delegates per rural settlement).

Delegates are elected for the period of three months.

Note.—In country places, where this is considered possible, administrative matters are dealt with direct by a general meeting of electors of the said locality.

58. For the work of current administration the Soviet elects from its own midst an executive organ (the executive committee) to consist of not more than five members in country places, and of not more than one member per fifty of its members, to aggregate no fewer than three, and not more than fifteen (at Petrograd and Moscow not more than ten). The executive committee is to be entirely responsible to its respective Soviet.

59. The Soviets are summoned by their respective executive committees at their discretion, or on the demand of not less than one-half of the number of members of their Soviets, at least once a week in town, and twice a week in country places.

60. Within the limits of their competence the Soviet, and, in the case provided by Art. 57, Note 1, the general meeting of electors, constitute the highest authority in respective territory.

CHAPTER XII

61. The competence of the regional, provincial, district, and communal organs of the Soviet authority includes :

- (a) The application of all the decrees of the corresponding higher organs of Soviet authority.
- (b) Measures for the cultural and economic development of the local territory.
- (c) Administration of all matters of local importance.
- (d) Unification of the entire activity of the Soviets in the locality.

62. The congresses of Soviets and their executive committees are authorised to control the activity of the local Soviets, and regional congresses and executive control all the Soviets of the region, provincial congresses and executive control all the Soviets in the provinces, except the town Soviets, which are not represented at the district congresses, etc. In addition, the regional and provincial congresses and their executive committees have the right to abrogate the decisions of the Soviets on their territory, informing the central Soviet authorities of the fact in cases of that importance.

63. To carry out the tasks imposed on the organs of Soviet authority, the Soviets (town and country) and the executive committees (regional, provincial, district, and communal) form suitable departments with administrators in charge of them.

PART IV

THE RIGHT TO VOTE AND TO BE ELECTED

CHAPTER XIII

64. The following citizens of both sexes of the R.S.F.S.R., who, at the time of election, have reached the age of eighteen, have the right to vote for and to be elected to the Soviets, regardless of creed, nationality, residence, etc.

(a) All those who earn a living by productive work of social usefulness, including those engaged in domestic duties enabling them to do productive work, such as—workers and employees of all kinds occupied in trades, commerce, farming, etc., peasants and Cossack-agriculturists, provided they do not employ hired labour for profit.

(b) Soldiers and sailors of the Soviet army and navy.

(c) Citizens in the category comprised in points (a) and (b) of Art. 64, who have become to any extent incapacitated for work.

(1) The local Soviets can, with the sanction of the central authority, lower the age limit fixed in this paragraph.

(2) Persons referred to in Paragraph 20 (Part II, Chapter V) who have not become Russian citizens also possess the franchise and may be elected to the Soviets.

65. The following have no right to vote, and cannot be elected, even though they possess qualifications mentioned above.

(a) Persons employing hired labour for profit.

(b) Persons living on unearned incomes, such as

interest on capital, income derived from businesses, revenues from property, etc.

- (c) Private traders and commercial agents.
- (d) Monks and the clergy of all Churches and religious denominations.
- (e) Officials and agents of the former police force, of the special corps of gendarmerie and secret police, and also members of the former Russian reigning dynasty.
- (f) Persons legally certified as lunatics, mentally deranged, and those under guardianship.
- (g) Persons sentenced by the established laws and courts of justice for venal and vicious offences.

CHAPTER XIV

66. Elections are held according to established usage on days decided upon by the local Soviets.

67. The elections take place in the presence of the electoral committee and a representative of the local Soviet.

68. In the event of the unavoidable absence of the representative of the Soviet authority, his place is taken by the president of the electoral committee, and in his absence, by the president of the electoral assembly.

69. Minutes of the progress and result of the elections are taken and signed by the members of the electoral committee and the Soviet representative.

70. The local Soviets, in accordance with instructions of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, decide on the electoral procedure as well as on the participation of trade unions and other labour organisation in the elections.

CHAPTER XV

71. All the facts in connection with the elections are reported to the local Soviet.

72. The Soviet appoints a revising committee to examine the results of the elections.

73. The revising committee reports to the Soviet the results of the examination.

74. The Soviet is the arbiter in the event of rival candidates claiming election.

75. In the event of the rejection of the claims of a candidate, the Soviet orders new elections.

76. In the event of irregularities committed throughout an election, the question of the quashing of the election is decided by the next higher organ of the Soviet authority.

77. The highest court for the quashing of an election to the Soviets is the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

78. The electors have at all times the statutory right to recall their elected delegates and to hold a new election.

PART V

BUDGET LAW

CHAPTER XVI

79. The financial policy of the R.S.F.S.R. in the present transition period of the dictatorship of the workers has for its fundamental object the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the creation of conditions leading to the complete equality of the citizens of the Republic in the domain of production and distribution of wealth. With

these objects it undertakes to put at the disposal of the organs of the Soviet authority all the necessary means for the satisfaction of all local and national requirements of the Soviet Republic, including, if needs be, interference with the rights of private property.

80. The State revenue and expenditure of the R.S.F.S.R. are embodied in a national budget.

81. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets or the All-Russian Central Executive Committee decide which revenues and levies form part of the national budget, and which are to be put at the disposal of the local Soviets; they also fix the limits of taxation.

82. The Soviets impose taxation and levies solely for local requirements. National requirements are met by grants from the State treasury.

83. No expenditure can be effected from the State treasury without the grant of a corresponding credit in the State budget, or a special decree of the central government

84. Credits required for meeting requirements of national character are put at the disposal of local Soviets by the State treasury through the corresponding people's commissariats.

85. All credits granted to the Soviets from the funds of the State treasury, and also all credits reserved in the estimates for local needs, are to be expended within the limits of the corresponding sections of the estimates (paragraphs and articles) for the specified needs only, and may not be diverted to any other requirements without a special decree of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and the council of people's commissaries.

86. The local Soviets compile half-yearly and yearly estimates of revenue and expenditure for

local needs. The estimates of village and communal Soviets and town Soviets taking part in district congresses, and also estimates of the district organs of the Soviet authority, are confirmed by the respective provincial and regional congresses or by their executive committees; the estimates of the town, provincial, and regional organs of the Soviet authority are confirmed by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and by the Council of people's commissaries.

87. For expenditure not provided in the estimates, and also in the event of the inadequacy of sums granted in the estimates, supplementary credits may be obtained by the Soviets through the respective people's commissariats.

88. In the event of the inadequacy of local funds to meet local requirements, grants in aid and loans for absolutely necessary expenditure are made to the local Soviets by the All-Russian Central Executive committee and the council of people's commissaries from the State treasury.

PART VI

COAT OF ARMS AND FLAG OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERAL SOVIET REPUBLIC

CHAPTER XVII

89. The coat of arms of the R.S.F.S.R. consists of a representation of a golden sickle and hammer crossed with handles downwards, on a red background, in rays of sun, and surrounded by a wreath of sheaves, with the inscription:

(a) Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic.

(b) Workers of the world, unite.

90. The commercial, naval, and military flag of the R.S.F.S.R. consists of a bright-red piece of cloth, in the top left corner of which there are inscribed in golden letters—"R.S.F.S.R.," or "Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic."

THE TEXT OF THE DECREE OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHING CONTROL OF INDUSTRY BY THE WORKPEOPLE

1. For the purpose of a systematic regulation of the economic bases of establishments engaged in manufacture, commerce, banking, agriculture, transport, co-operative activities either for production or distribution, and the like, in which workpeople are employed or for which work is performed at home, control by the workpeople shall be introduced, which shall be exercised over production, the purchase and sale of products and raw materials and their preservation as also over the financial management of such undertakings.

2. Control by workpeople shall be exercised in each establishment concerned through the elected organisation of such workpeople, which shall include workshop and factory committees, councils of starosta (elders), etc. Such organisations must comprise representatives of the salaried employees and of the technical staffs.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANISATION

3. For each large town, government, or manufacturing district there shall be formed a district council of workmen's control, which shall operate

as an organisation belonging to the council of workmen's, soldiers', and peasants' deputies, and shall be composed of representatives of the trade unions, workshop, factory, and other workpeople's committees, as also of workmen's co-operative societies.

4. Until such time as a congress of the District Councils of Workmen's Control can be held, an All-Russian Council of Workmen's Control shall be founded at Petrograd, consisting of representatives of the following organisations: The All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies (five representatives), the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Peasants' Deputies (five), the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions (five), the All-Russian Central Office of Workmen's Co-operative Societies (two), the All-Russian Bureau of Factory Committees (five), the All-Russian Union of Engineers and Technical Employees (five), the All-Russian Union of Agricultural Surveyors (two), All-Russian Trade Union federations with less than 100,000 members (one each), similar federations with more than 100,000 members (two each), the Petrograd Council of Trade Unions (two).

5. From among the superior officials of the Workmen's Control shall be formed committees consisting of expert examiners (technical experts, accountants, etc.), which, both on the initiative of the officials themselves, and on the request of the inferior officials of the Workmen's Control, shall be directed to examine the financial and technical management of the undertaking.

6. The officials of the Workmen's Control have the right to supervise production, to fix the minimum amount of production of the estab-

lishment, and to take necessary measures for ascertaining the prime cost of manufactured products.

7. They have also the right of supervising the whole of the correspondence of the undertaking, and proceedings may be taken at law against any proprietor who conceals such correspondence. Commercial secrecy is annulled. Proprietors are obliged to produce to the officials of the Workmen's Council all books and reports both for the current and earlier business years.

8. The decisions of the officials of the Workmen's Control are binding upon proprietors, and can only be annulled by decisions of higher officials of the control.

9. Three days' grace shall be allowed to the proprietor or to the management of the undertaking, during which decisions of subordinate officials of the Workmen's Control may be contested before the responsible higher officials of the control.

10. In all business establishments the proprietor and the representatives of the workpeople and employees chosen to exercise control shall be responsible to the State for the strictest regulation, discipline, and protection of the property. Criminal proceedings may be taken against any person guilty of concealing materials, products, and orders, of keeping inaccurate accounts, or committing other misdemeanours.

SETTLEMENTS OF DISPUTES

11. District Councils of Workmen's Control (Paragraph 5) shall give decisions concerning all questions and disputes between the subordinate officials of the control, and also complaints made

by proprietors ; also, while having due regard to the specific character of the products of the establishments and to local conditions, they shall issue instructions within the limits imposed by the decisions and directions of the All-Russian Council of Workmen's Control, and shall supervise the activity of the subordinate officials of the Workmen's Control.

12. The All-Russian Council of Workmen's Control shall formulate general plans and instructions regarding control by the workpeople, shall issue compulsory regulations, co-ordinate the reciprocal relations of the district councils, and operate as the body of final appeal with regard to all matters having connection with the control of undertakings by the workpeople.

13. The All-Russian Council of Workmen's Control shall co-ordinate the activity of the organisations of Workmen's Control in unison with the activity of all other bodies which are engaged in the work of organising social economic relations. A body of rules with regard to the mutual relations between the All-Russian Council of Workmen's Control and other bodies engaged in organising and regulating social economics will be issued separately.

All laws and rescripts which limit the activities of factory, workshop, and other committees and councils of the workpeople and delegate representatives are hereby annulled.